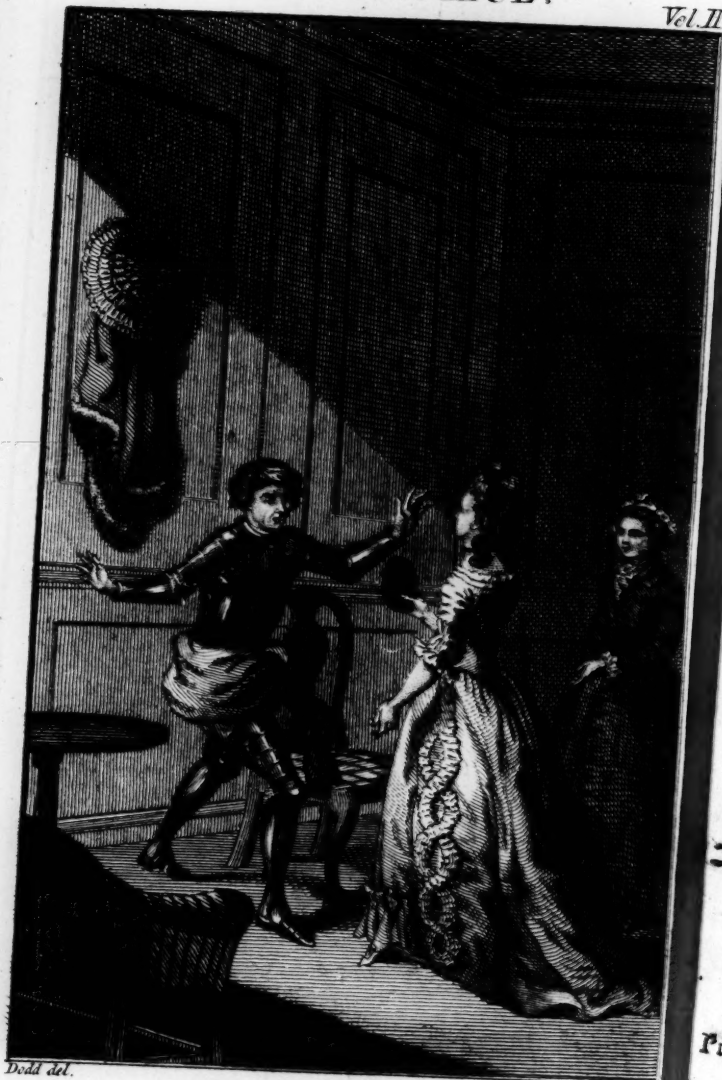


FRONTISPIECE.

Vol. II



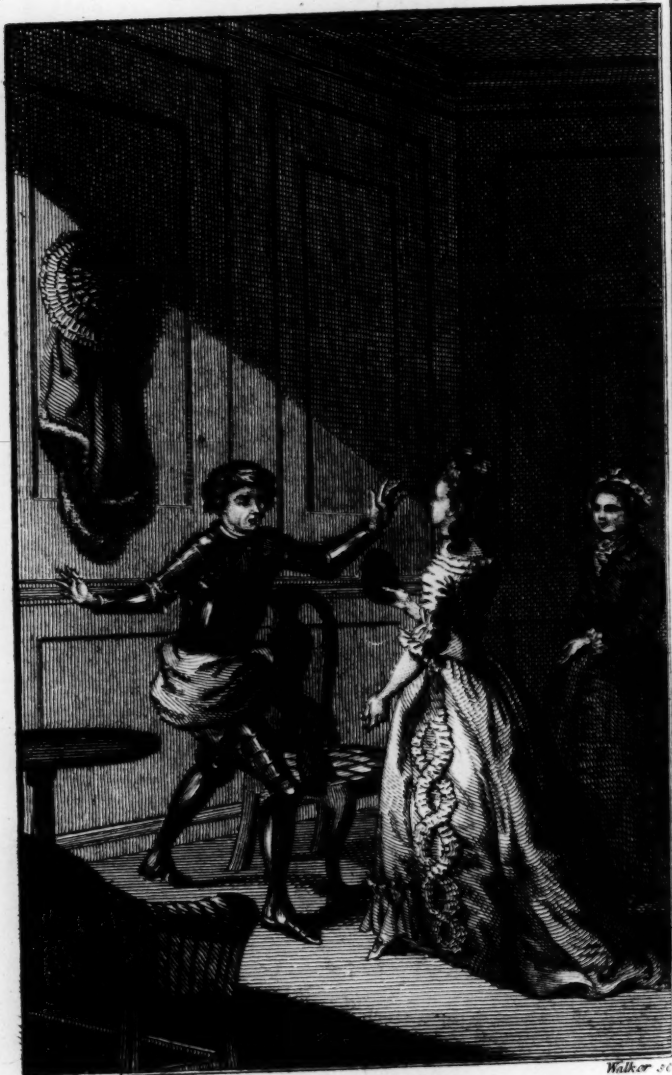
Dodd del.

Walker sc.

Sir Launcelot discovers Aurelia at the Inn.

Published as the Act directs 8th July 1780.

Print



Dodd del.

Walker sc.

Sir Launcelot discovers Aurelia at the Inn.

Published as the Act directs 6th July 1780.

THE
ADVENTURES
OF

Sir Launcelot Greaves.

By T. SMOLLET, M.D.

Author of RÖDERICK RANDOM.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOSEPH WENMAN,
No. 144, FLEET-STREET.

M.DCC.LXXX.

THE
ADVERTURER

OF
THE
LONDON GAZETTE



IN THE
T. M. D.

NUMBER OF THE LONDON GAZETTE

Vol. II.
Part II.
No. 1.
LONDON:
Printed and Sold by
J. B. G. & Co. 10, Abchurch Lane, in the City of London.
1853.

THE
ADVENTURES

OF

Sir Launcelot Greaves.

CHAP. XIII.

In which our Knight is tantalized with a transient glimpse of felicity.

THE success of our adventurer, which we have particularized in the last chapter, could not fail of enhancing his character, not only among those who knew him, but also among the people of the town to whom he was an utter stranger. The populace surrounded the house, and testified their approbation in loud huzzas. Captain Crowe was more than ever inspired with veneration for his admired patron, and more than ever determined to pursue his footsteps in the road of chivalry. Fillet, and his friend the lawyer, could not help conceiving an affection, and even a profound esteem, for the exalted virtue, the person, and the accomplishments of the knight, dashed as they were

were with a mixture of extravagance and insanity. Even Sir Launcelot himself was elevated to an extraordinary degree of self-complacency on the fortunate issue of his adventure, and became more and more persuaded that a knight-errant's profession might be exercised, even in England, to the advantage of the community. The only person of the company who seemed unanimated with the general satisfaction was Mr. Thomas Clarke. He had, not without good reason, laid it down as a maxim, that knight-errantry and madness were synonymous terms: and that madness, though exhibited in the most advantageous and agreeable light, could not change its nature, but must continue a perversion of sense to the end of the chapter. He perceived the additional impression which the brain of his uncle had sustained, from the happy manner in which the benevolence of Sir Launcelot had so lately operated; and began to fear it would be, in a little time, quite necessary to have recourse to a commission of lunacy, which might not only disgrace the family of the Crowes, but also tend to invalidate the settlement which the captain had already made in favour of our young lawyer.

Perplexed with these cogitations, Mr. Clarke appealed to our adventurer's own reflection. He expatiated upon the bad consequences that would attend his uncle's perseverance in the execution of a scheme so foreign to his faculties; and intreated him, for the love of God, to divert him from his purpose, either by arguments or authority; as, of all mankind, the knight alone had gained such an ascendancy over his spirit, that he would listen to his exhortations with respect and submission. Our adventurer was not so mad, but that he saw and owned the rationality of these remarks. He readily undertook to employ all his influence with Crowe to dissuade him from his extravagant design; and seized the first opportunity of being alone with the captain, to signify his sentiments on this subject. "Captain Crowe (said he),

you

you

you are then determined to proceed in the course of knight-errantry?" "I am, (replied the seaman) with God's help, d'ye see, and the assistance of wind and weather—" "What, do'st thou talk of wind and weather! (cried the knight, in an elevated tone of affected transport :) without the help of Heaven, indeed, we are all vanity, imbecility, weakness, and wretchedness; but if thou art resolved to embrace the life of an errant, let me not hear thee so much as whisper a doubt, a wish, an hope, or sentiment with respect to any other obstacle, which wind or weather, fire or water, sword or famine, danger or disappointment, may throw in the way of thy career.—When the duty of thy profession calls, thou must singly rush upon innumerable hosts of armed men: thou must storm the breach in the mouths of batteries loaded with death and destruction, while, every step thou movest, thou art exposed to the horrible explosion of subterranean mines, which, being sprung, will whirl thee aloft in air, a mangled corse, to feed the fowls of heaven. Thou must leap into the abyss of dismal caves and caverns, replete with poisonous toads and hissing serpents. Thou must plunge into seas of burning sulphur. Thou must launch upon the ocean in a crazy bark, when the foaming billows roll mountain high, when the lightning flashes, the thunder roars, and the howling tempest blows, as if it would commix the jarring elements of air and water, earth and fire, and reduce all nature to the original anarchy of chaos. Thus involved, thou must turn thy prow full against the fury of the storm, and stem the boisterous surge to thy destined port, though at the distance of a thousand leagues—thou must."—

"Avast, avast, brother, (exclaimed the impatient Crowe) you've got into the high latitudes, d'ye see:—if so be as you spank it away at that rate, adad, I can't continue in tow—we must cast off the rope, or 'ware timbers.—As for your 'osts and breeches, and hurling aloft, d'ye see, your caves and caverns, whistling

whistling tuoads and serpents, burning brimstone and foaming billows, we must take our hap ; I value 'em not a rotten ratline :—but, as for sailing in the wind's eye, brother, you must give me leave—no offence, I hope—I pretend to be a thorough-bred seaman, d'ye see—and I'll be damned if you, or e'er an arrant that broke biscuit ever sailed in a three-mast vessel within five points of the wind, allowing for variation and lee-way.—No, no, brother, none of your tricks upon travellers—I a'n't now to learn my compass." "Tricks! (cried the knight, starting up, and laying his hand on the pommel of his sword) what! suspect my honour!"

Crowe, supposing him to be really incensed, interrupted him with great earnestness, saying, "Nay, don't—what a-pize!—adds-buntlines!—I did'n't go to give you the lie, brother, smite my limbs: I only said as how to sail in the wind's eye was impossible." "And I say unto thee, (resumed the knight) nothing is impossible to a true knight-errant, inspired and animated by love." "And I say unto thee, (hollowed Crowe) if so be as how love pretends to turn his hawse-holes to the wind, he's no seaman d'ye see, but a snotty-nose lubberly boy, that knows not a cat from a capstan—a-don't." "He that does not believe that love is an infallible pilot, must not embark upon the voyage of chivalry; for, next to the protection of Heaven, it is from love that the knight derives all his prowess and glory. The bare name of his mistress invigorates his arm: the remembrance of her beauty infuses in his breast the most heroic sentiments of courage, while the idea of her chastity hedges him round like a charm, and renders him invulnerable to the sword of his antagonist. A knight without a mistress is a mere non-entity, or at least a monster in nature, a pilot without compass, a ship without rudder, and must be driven to and fro upon the waves of discomfiture and disgrace." "An that be all, (replied the sailor) I told you before as how

I've

I've got a sweetheart, as true a hearted girl as ever swung in canvas.—What tho'f she may have started a hoop in rolling—that signifies nothing—I'll warrant her tight as a nut-shell.” “She must, in your opinion, be a paragon either of beauty or virtue. Now, as you have given up the last, you must uphold her charms unequalled, and her person without a parallel.” “I do, I do uphold she will sail upon a parallel as well as e'er a frigate that was rigged to the northward of fifty.” “At that rate she must rival the attractions of her whom I adore, but that, I say, is impossible: the perfections of my Aurelia are altogether supernatural; and as two suns cannot shine together in the same sphere with equal splendor, so I affirm, and will prove with my body, that your mistress, in comparison with mine, is as a glow-worm to the meridian sun, a rush-light to the full moon, or a stale mackerel's eye to a pearl of orient.” “Hark ye, brother, you might give good words, however, an we once fall a-jawing, d'ye see, I can heave out as much bilge-water as another; and since you besmear my sweetheart Besselia, I can as well bedaub your mistress Aurelia, whom I value no more than old junk, pork slush, or stinking stockfish.” “Enough, enough—such blasphemy shall not pass unchastised. In consideration of our having fed from the same table, and maintained together a friendly, though short intercourse, I will not demand the combat before you are duly prepared. Proceed to the first great town, where you can be furnished with horse and harnessing, with arms offensive and defensive: provide a trusty squire, assume a motto and device—declare yourself a son of chivalry; and proclaim the excellence of her who rules your heart. I shall fetch a compass, and wheresoever we may chance to meet, let us engage with equal arms in mortal combat, that shall decide and determine this dispute.”

So saying, our adventurer stalked with great solemnity

mity into another apartment; while Crowe, being sufficiently irritated, snapped his fingers in token of defiance. Honest Crowe thought himself scurvily used by a man whom he had cultivated with such humility of veneration; and, after an incoherent ejaculation of sea-oaths, went in quest of his nephew, in order to make him acquainted with this unlucky transaction.

In the mean time Sir Launcelot, having ordered supper, retired into his own chamber, and gave a loose to the most tender emotions of his heart. He recollected all the fond ideas which had been excited in the course of his correspondence with the charming Aurelia. He remembered, with horror, the cruel letter he had received from that young lady, containing a formal renunciation of his attachment, so unsuitable to the whole tenor of her character and conduct. He revolved the late adventure of the coach, and the declaration of Mr. Clarke, with equal eagerness and astonishment; and was seized with the most ardent desire of unravelling a mystery so interesting to the predominant passion of his heart.—All these mingled considerations produced a kind of ferment in the œconomy of his mind, which subsided into a profound reverie, compounded of hope and perplexity.

From this trance he was waked by the arrival of his squire, who entered the room with the blood trickling over his nose; and stood before him without speaking. When the knight asked whose livery was that he wore, he replied, “ ’Tis your honour’s own livery:—I received it on your account, and hope as you will quit the score.” Then he proceeded to inform his master, that two officers of the army having come into the kitchen, insisted upon having for their supper the victuals which Sir Launcelot had bespoke; and that he, the squire, objecting to the proposal, one of them had seized the poker, and basted him with his own blood; that when he told them he belonged

to a knight-errant, and threatened them with the vengeance of his master, they cursed and abused him, calling him Sancho Panza, and such dogs names; and bade him tell his master Don Quicksot, that, if he made any noise, they would confine him to his cage, and lie with his mistress Dulcinea. "To be sure, Sir, (said he) they thought you as great a nincompoop as your squire—trim tram, like master, like man;—but I hope as how you will give them a Rowland for their Oliver."

"Misceant! (cried the knight) you have provoked the gentlemen with your impertinence, and they have chastised you as you deserve. I tell thee, Crabshaw, they have saved me the trouble of punishing thee with my own hands; and well it is for thee, sinner as thou art, that they themselves have performed the office: for, had they complained to me of thy insolence and rusticity, by Heaven! I would have made thee an example to all the impudent squires upon the face of the earth. Hence then, avaunt, caitiff.—Let his majesty's officers, who are perhaps fatigued with hard duty in the service of their country, comfort themselves with the supper which was intended for me, and leave me undisturbed to my own meditations.

Timothy did not require a repetition of this command, which he forthwith obeyed, growling within himself, that thence-forward he should let every cuckold wear his own horns; but he could not help entertaining some doubts with respect to the courage of his master, who, he supposed, was one of those Hector's who have their fighting days, but are not at all times equally prepared for the combat.

The knight, having taken a slight repast, retired to his repose; and had for some time enjoyed a very agreeable slumber, when he was startled by a knocking at his chamber-door. "I beg your honour's pardon, (said the landlady) but there are two uncivil persons in the kitchen, who have well nigh turned my whole house topsy-turvy. Not contented with laying

violent hands on your honour's supper, they want to be rude to two young ladies who are just arrived, and have called for a post-chaise to go on. They are afraid to open their chamber-door to get out—and the young lawyer is like to be murdered for taking the ladies part."

Sir Launcelot, though he refused to take notice of the insult which had been offered to himself, no sooner heard of the distress of the ladies than he started up, huddled on his cloaths, and, girding his sword to his loins, advanced with a deliberate pace to the kitchen, where he perceived Thomas Clarke warmly engaged in altercation with a couple of young men, dressed in regimentals, who, with a peculiar air of arrogance and ferocity, treated him with great insolence and contempt. Tom was endeavouring to persuade them, that, in the constitution of England, the military always was subservient to the civil power; and that their behaviour to a couple of helpless young women was not only unbecoming gentlemen, but expressly contrary to the law, inasmuch as they might be sued for an assault on an action of damages.

To this remonstrance the two heroes in red replied by a volley of dreadful oaths, intermingled with threats, which put the lawyer in some pain for his ears. While one thus endeavoured to intimidate honest Tom Clarke, the other thundered at the door of the apartment to which the ladies had retired, demanding admittance, but received no other answer than a loud shriek. Our adventurer advancing to this uncivil champion, accosted him thus in a grave and solemn tone: "Assuredly I could not have believed, except upon the evidence of my own senses, that persons who have the appearance of gentlemen, and bear his majesty's honourable commission in the army, could behave so wide of the decorum due to society, of a proper respect to the laws, of that humanity which we owe to our fellow-creatures, and that delicate regard for the fair-sex, which ought to prevail

prevail in the breast of every gentleman, and which in particular dignifies the character of a soldier. To whom shall that weaker, though more amiable part of the creation, fly for protection, if they are insulted and outraged by those whose more immediate duty it is to afford them security and defence from injury and violence? What right have you, or any man upon earth, to excite riot in a public inn, which may be deemed a temple sacred to hospitality, to disturb the quiet of your fellow-guests, some of them perhaps exhausted by fatigue, some of them invaded by distemper, to interrupt the king's lieges in their course of journeying upon their lawful occasions? Above all, what motive but wanton barbarity could prompt you to violate the apartment, and terrify the tender hearts of two helpless young ladies travelling no doubt upon some cruel emergency, which compels them unattended to encounter in the night the dangers of the highway?"

"Hark ye, Don Bethlem, (said the captain, strutting up and cocking his hat in the face of our adventurer) you may be as mad as e'er a straw-crowned monarch in Moorfields, for aught I care; but damme! don't you be saucy, otherwise I shall dub your worship with a good stick across your shoulders." "How! petulant boy, (cried the knight) since you are so ignorant of urbanity, I will give you a lesson that you shall not easily forget." So saying, he unsheathed his sword, and called upon the soldier to draw in his defence.

The reader may have seen the physiognomy of a stockholder at Jonathan's when the rebels were at Derby, or the features of a bard when accosted by a bailiff, or the countenance of an alderman when his banker stops payment; if he has seen either of these phenomena, he may conceive the appearance that was now exhibited by the visage of the ferocious captain, when the naked sword of Sir Launcelot glanced before his eyes: far from attempting to pro-

duce his own, which was of unconscionable length, he stood motionless as a statue, staring with the most ghastly look of terror and astonishment. His companion, who partook of his panic, seeing matters brought to a very serious crisis, interposed with a crest-fallen countenance, assuring Sir Launcelot they had no intention to quarrel, and what they'd done was intirely for the sake of the frolick.

"By such frolicks (cried the knight) you become nuisances to society, bring yourselves into contempt, and disgrace the corps to which you belong. I now perceive the truth of the observation, that cruelty always resides with cowardice. My contempt is changed into compassion; and as you are probably of good families, I must insist upon this young man's drawing his sword, and acquitting himself in such a manner as may screen him from the most infamous censure which an officer can undergo." "Lack a day, Sir, (said the other) we are no officers, but 'prentices to two London haberdashers, travellers for orders. Captain is a good travelling name, and we have dressed ourselves like officers to procure more respect upon the road."

The knight said he was very glad, for the honour of the service, to find they were impostors; though they deserved to be chastised for arrogating to themselves an honourable character, which they had not spirit to sustain.

These words were scarce pronounced, when Mr. Clarke approaching one of the bravadoes, who had threatened to crop his ears, bestowed such a benediction on his jaw, as he could not receive without immediate humiliation; while Timothy Crabshaw, smarting from his broken-head and his want of supper, saluted the other with a Yorkshire hug, that layed him across the body of his companion. In a word, the two pseudo-officers were very roughly handled for their presumption in pretending to act characters for which they were so ill qualified.

While

While Clarke and Crabshaw were thus laudably employed, the two young ladies passed through the kitchen so suddenly, that the knight had only a transient glimpse of their backs, and they disappeared before he could possibly make a tender of his services. The truth is, they dreaded nothing so much as their being discovered, and took the first opportunity of gliding into the chaise, which had been for some time waiting in the passage.

Mr. Clarke was much more disconcerted than our adventurer, by their sudden escape. He ran with great eagerness to the door, and perceiving they were flown, returned to Sir Launcelot, saying, "Lord bless my soul, Sir, didn't you see who it was?" "Hah! how! (exclaimed the knight, reddening with alarm) who was it?" "One of them (replied the lawyer) was Dolly, our old landlady's daughter at the Black Lyon.—I knew her when first she lighted, notwithstanding her being neatly dressed in a green joseph, which, I'll assure you, Sir, becomes her remarkably well. I'd never desire to see a prettier creature. As for the other, she's a very genteel woman; but whether old or young, ugly or handsome, I can't pretend to say; for she was masqued.—I had just time to salute Dolly, and ask a few questions;—but all she could tell me, was, that the masqued lady's name was Miss Meadows; and that she, Dolly, was hired as her waiting-woman."

When the name of Meadows was mentioned, Sir Launcelot, whose spirits had been in violent commotion, became suddenly calm and serene, and he began to communicate to Clarke the dialogue which had passed between him and Captain Crowe, when the hostess, addressing herself to our errant, "Well, (said she) I have had the honour to accommodate many ladies of the first fashion at the White Hart, both young and old, proud and lowly, ordinary and handsome; but such a miracle as Miss Meadows I never yet did see. Lord, let me never thrive but I think

she is of something more than a human creature.—O, had your honour but set eyes on her, you would have said it was a vision from Heaven, a cherubim of beauty:—for my part, I can hardly think it was any thing but a dream:—then so meek, so mild, so good-natured and generous! I say, blessed is the young woman who tends upon such a heavenly creature:—and poor dear young lady! she seems to be under grief and affliction; for the tears stole down her lovely cheeks, and looked for all the world like orient pearl.”

Sir Launcelot listened attentively to the description, which reminded him of his dear Aurelia, and, sighing bitterly, withdrew to his own apartment.

C H A P. XIV.

Which shews,

*That a man cannot always sip,
When the cup is at his lip.*

THOSE who have felt the doubts, the jealousies, the resentments, the humiliations, the hopes, the despair, the impatience, and, in a word, the infinite disquiets of love, will be able to conceive the sea of agitation on which our adventurer was tossed all night long, without repose or intermission. Sometimes he resolved to employ all his industry and address in discovering the place in which Aurelia was sequestered, that he might rescue her from the supposed restraint to which she had been subjected. But, when his heart beat high with the anticipation of this exploit, he was suddenly invaded, and all his ardour checked, by the remembrance of that fatal letter, written and signed by her own hand, which had divorced him from all hope, and first unsettled his understanding. The emotions waked by this remembrance were so strong, that he leaped from the bed,
and,

and, the fire being still burning in the chimney, lighted a candle, that he might once more banquet his spleen by reading the original billet, which, together with the ring he had received from Miss Darnel's mother, he kept in a small box, carefully deposited within his portmanteau. This being instantly unlocked, he unfolded the paper, and recited the contents in these words:

"S I R,

"Obliged as I am by the passion you profess, and the eagerness with which you endeavour to give me the most convincing proof of your regard, I feel some reluctance in making you acquainted with a circumstance, which, in all probability, you will not learn without some disquiet. But the affair is become so interesting, I am compelled to tell you, that however agreeable your proposals may have been to those whom I thought it my duty to please by every reasonable concession, and howsoever you may have been flattered by the seeming complacency with which I have heard your addresses, I now find it absolutely necessary to speak in a decisive strain, to assure you, that, without sacrificing my own peace, I cannot admit a continuation of your correspondence; and that your regard for me will be best shewn by your desisting from a pursuit, which is altogether inconsistent with the happiness of

AURELIA DARNEL."

Having pronounced aloud the words that composed this dismissal, he hastily replaced the cruel scroll; and, being too well acquainted with the hand to harbour the least doubt of its being genuine, threw himself into his bed in a transport of despair, mingled with resentment; during the predominancy of which, he determined to proceed in the career of adventure, and endeavour to forget the unkindness of his mistress, amidst the avocations of knight-errantry. Such was

the resolution that governed his thoughts, when he rose in the morning, ordered Crabshaw to saddle Bronzomarte, and demanded a bill of his expence. Before these orders could be executed, the good woman of the house, entering his apartment, told him, with marks of concern, that the poor young lady, Miss Meadows, had dropped her pocket-book in the next chamber, where it was found by the hostess, who now presented it unopened.

Our knight, having called in Mrs. Oakley and her son as witnesses, unfolded the book, without reading one syllable of the contents, and found in it five bank-notes, amounting to two hundred and thirty pounds. Perceiving, at once, that the loss of this treasure might be attended with the most embarrassing consequences to the owner, and reflecting that this was a case which demanded the immediate interposition and assistance of chivalry, he declared, that he himself would convey it safely into the hands of Miss Meadows; and desired to know the road she had pursued, that he might set out in quest of her, without a moment's delay. It was not without some difficulty that this information was obtained from the post-boy, who had been enjoined secrecy by the lady, and even gratified with a handsome reward for his promised discretion. The same method was used to make him disgorge his trust: he undertook to conduct Sir Launcelot, who hired a post-chaise for dispatch, and immediately departed, after having directed his squire to follow his tract with the horses.

Yet, whatever haste he made, it is absolutely necessary for the reader's satisfaction, that we should outstrip the chaise, and visit the ladies before his arrival. We shall therefore, without circumlocution, premise, that Miss Meadows was no other than that paragon of beauty and goodness, the all-accomplished Miss Aurelia Darnel. She had, with that meekness of resignation peculiar to herself, for some years submitted to every species of oppression which her uncle's

tyranny

tyranny of disposition could plan, and his unlimited power of guardianship execute, till at length, it rose to such a pitch of despotism as she could not endure. He had projected a match between his niece and one Philip Sycamore, Esq; a young man who possessed a pretty considerable estate in the North Country; who liked Aurelia's person, but was enamoured of her fortune, and had offered to purchase Anthony's interest and alliance with certain concessions, which could not but be agreeable to a man of loose principles, who would have found it a difficult task to settle the accounts of his wardship.

According to the present estimate of matrimonial felicity, Sycamore might have found admittance as a future son-in-law to any private family of the kingdom. He was by birth a gentleman, tall, straight, and muscular, with a fair, sleek, unmeaning face, that promised more simplicity than ill nature. His education had not been neglected, and he inherited an estate of five thousand a year. Miss Darnel, however, had penetration enough to discover and despise him as a strange composition of rapacity and profusion, absurdity and good-sense, bashfulness and impudence, self-conceit and diffidence, awkwardness and ostentation, insolence and good-nature, rashness and timidity. He was continually surrounded and preyed upon by certain vermin called led-captains and buffoons, who shewed him in leading-strings like a sucking giant, rifled his pockets without ceremony, ridiculed him to his face, traduced his character, and exposed him in a thousand ludicrous attitudes for the diversion of the public; while, all the time, he knew their knavery, saw their drift, detested their morals, and despised their understanding. He was so infatuated by indolence of thought, and communication with folly, that he would have rather suffered himself to be led into a ditch with company, than be at the pains of going over a bridge alone; and involved himself in a thousand difficulties, the natural conse-

quences of an error in the first concoction, which, though he plainly saw it, he had not resolution enough to avoid.

Such was the character of squire Sycamore, who professed himself the rival of Sir Launcelot Greaves in the good graces of Miss Aurelia Darnel. He had in this pursuit persevered with more constancy and fortitude than he ever exerted in any other instance. Being generally needy from extravagance, he was stimulated by his wants, and animated by his vanity, which was artfully instigated by his followers, who hoped to share the spoils of his success. These motives were reinforced by the incessant and eager exhortations of Anthony Darnel, who seeing his ward in the last year of her minority, thought there was no time to be lost in securing his own indemnification, and snatching his niece for ever from the hopes of Sir Launcelot, whom he now hated with redoubled animosity. Finding Aurelia deaf to all his remonstrances, proof against ill-usage, and resolutely averse to the proposed union with Sycamore, he endeavoured to detach her thoughts from Sir Launcelot, by forging tales to the prejudice of his constancy and moral character; and, finally, by recapitulating the proofs and instances of his distraction, which he particularized with the most malicious exaggerations.

In spite of all his arts, he found it impracticable to surmount her objections to the purposed alliance, and therefore changed his battery. Instead of transferring her to the arms of his friend, he resolved to detain her in his own power by a legal claim, which would invest him with the uncontrouled management of her affairs. This was a charge of lunacy, in consequence of which he hoped to obtain a commission, to secure a jury to his wish, and be appointed sole committee of her person, as well as steward on her estate, of which he would then be heir apparent.

As the first steps towards the execution of this honest

nest scheme, he had subjected Aurelia to the superintendency and direction of an old duenna, who had been formerly the procuress of his pleasures; and hired a new set of servants, who were given to understand, at their first admission, that the young lady was disordered in her brain.

An impression of this nature is easily preserved among servants, when the master of the family thinks his interest is concerned in supporting the imposture. The melancholy produced from her confinement, and the vivacity of her resentment under ill-usage, were, by the address of Anthony, and the prepossession of his domesticks, perfected into the effects of insanity; and the same interpretation was strained upon her most indifferent words and actions. The tidings of Miss Darnel's disorder were carefully circulated in whispers, and soon reached the ears of Mr. Sycamore, who was not at all pleased with the information. From his knowledge of Anthony's disposition, he suspected the truth of the report; and unwilling to see such a prize ravished, as it were, from his grasp, he, with the advice and assistance of his myrmidons, resolved to set the captive at liberty, in full hope of turning the adventure to his own advantage: for he argued in this manner: "If she is in fact *compos mentis*, her gratitude will operate in my behalf, and even prudence will advise her to embrace the proffered asylum from the villainy of her uncle. If she is really disordered, it will be no great difficulty to deceive her into a marriage, and then I become her trustee of course."

The plan was well conceived; but Sycamore had not discretion enough to keep his own counsel. From weakness and vanity, he blabbed the design, which in a little time was communicated to Anthony Darnel; and he took his precautions accordingly. Being infirm in his own person, and consequently unfit for opposing the violence of some desperadoes, whom he knew to be the satellites of Sycamore, he prepar-

ed

ed a private retreat for his ward at the house of an old gentleman, the companion of his youth, whom he had imposed upon with the fiction of her being disordered in her understanding, and amused with a story of a dangerous design upon her person. Thus cautioned and instructed, the gentleman had gone with his own coach and servants to receive Aurelia and her governante at a third house, to which she had been privately removed from her uncle's habitation; and in this journey it was, that she had been so accidentally protected from the violence of the robbers by the interposition and prowess of our adventurer.

As he did not wear his helmet in that exploit, she recognized his features as he passed the coach, and, struck with the apparition, shrieked aloud. She had been assured by her guardian, that his design was to convey her to her own house; but perceiving, in the sequel, that the carriage struck off upon a different road, and finding herself in the hands of strangers, she began to dread a much more disagreeable fate, and conceive doubts and ideas that filled her tender heart with horror and affliction. When she expostulated with the duenna, she was treated like a changeling, admonished to be quiet, and reminded that she was under the direction of those who would manage her with a tender regard to her own welfare, and the honour of her family. When she addressed herself to the old gentleman, who was not much subject to the emotions of humanity, and besides firmly persuaded that she was deprived of her reason, he made no answer; but laid his finger on his mouth, by way of enjoining silence.

This mysterious behaviour aggravated the fears of the poor hapless young lady; and her terrors waxed so strong, that when she saw Tom Clarke, whose face she knew, she called aloud for assistance; and even pronounced the name of his patron Sir Launcelot

Greaves,

Greaves, which she imagined might stimulate him the more to attempt something for her deliverance.

The reader has already been informed in what manner the endeavours of Tom and his uncle miscarried. Miss Darnel's new keeper having, in the course of his journey, halted for refreshment at the Black Lyon, of which being landlord, he believed the good woman and her family were intirely devoted to his will and pleasure, Aurelia found an opportunity of speaking in private to Dolly, who had a very prepossessing appearance. She conveyed a purse of money into the hands of this young woman, telling her, while the tears trickled down her cheeks, that she was a young lady of fortune, in danger, as she apprehended, of assassination. This hint, which she communicated in a whisper, while the governante stood at the other end of the room, was sufficient to interest the compassionate Dolly in her behalf. As soon as the coach departed, she made her mother acquainted with the transaction; and as they naturally concluded that the young lady expected their assistance, they resolved to approve themselves worthy of her confidence.

Dolly having insisted in their design a trusty countryman, one of her own professed admirers, they set out together for the house of the gentleman in which the fair prisoner was confined, and waited for her in secret at the end of a pleasant park, in which they naturally concluded she might be indulged with the privilege of taking the air. The event justified their conception: on the very first day of their watch they saw her approach, accompanied by her duenna. Dolly and her attendant immediately tied their horses to a stake, and retired into a thicket, which Aurelia did not fail to enter. Dolly forthwith appeared, and, taking her by the hand, led her to the horses, one of which she mounted in the utmost hurry and trepidation, while the countryman bound the duenna with a cord, prepared for the purpose, gagged her mouth, and

and tied her to a tree, where he left her to her own meditations. Then he mounted before Dolly, and through unfrequented paths conducted his charge to an inn on the post-road, where a chaise was ready for their reception.

As he refused to proceed farther, lest his absence from his own home should create suspicion, Aurelia rewarded him liberally; but would not part with her faithful Dolly, who, indeed, had no inclination to be discharged: such an affection and attachment had she already acquired for the amiable fugitive, though she knew neither her story, nor her true name. Aurelia thought proper to conceal both, and assumed the fictitious appellation of Meadows, until she should be better acquainted with the disposition and discretion of her new attendant. The first resolution she could take in the present flutter of her spirits, was to make the best of her way to London, where she thought she might find an asylum in the house of a female relation, married to an eminent physician, known by the name of Kawdle. In the execution of this hasty resolve, she travelled at a violent rate, from stage to stage, in a carriage drawn by four horses, without halting for necessary refreshment or repose, until she judged herself out of danger of being overtaken. As she appeared overwhelmed with grief and consternation, the good-natured Dolly endeavoured to alleviate her distress with diverting discourse; and, among other less interesting stories, entertained her with the adventures of Sir Launcelot and Captain Crowe, which she had seen and heard recited while they remained at the Black Lion: nor did she fail to introduce Mr. Thomas Clarke, in her narrative, with such a favourable representation of his person and character, as plainly discovered that her own heart had received a rude shock from the irresistible force of his qualifications.

The history of Sir Launcelot Greaves was a theme which effectually fixed the attention of Aurelia, distracted

distracted as her ideas must have been by the circumstances of her present situation. The particulars of his conduct, since the correspondence between her and him had ceased, she heard with equal concern and astonishment; for, how far soever she deemed herself detached from all possibility of future connection with that young gentleman, she was not made of such indifferent stuff as to learn without emotion the calamitous disorder of an accomplished youth, whose extraordinary virtues she could not but revere.

As they had deviated from the post-road, taken precautions to conceal their route, and made such progress, that they were now within one day's journey of London, the careful and affectionate Dolly, seeing her dear lady quite exhausted with fatigue, used all her natural rhetoric, which was very powerful, mingled with tears that flowed from the heart, in persuading Aurelia to enjoy some repose; and so far she succeeded in the attempt, that for one night the toil of travelling was intermitted. This recess from incredible fatigue was a pause that afforded our adventurer time to overtake them before they reached the metropolis, that vast labyrinth, in which Aurelia might have been for ever lost to his inquiry.

It was in the afternoon of the day which succeeded his departure from the White Hart, that Sir Launcelot arrived at the inn, where Miss Aurelia Darnel had bespoke a dish of tea, and a post-chaise for the next stage. He had by inquiry traced her a considerable way, without ever dreaming who the person really was whom he thus pursued, and now he desired to speak with her attendant. Dolly was not a little surprised to see Sir Launcelot Greaves, of whose character she had conceived a very sublime idea from the narrative of Mr. Thomas Clarke; but she was still more surprised when he gave her to understand that he had charged himself with the pocket-book, containing the bank-notes which Miss Meadows had dropped

dropped in the house where they had been threatened with insult. Miss Darnel had not yet discovered her disaster, when her attendant, running into the apartment, presented the prize which she had received from our adventurer, with his compliments to Miss Meadows, implying a request to be admitted into her presence, that he might make a personal tender of his best services.

It is not to be supposed that the amiable Aurelia heard unmoved such a message from a person, whom her maid discovered to be the very identical Sir Launcelot Greaves, whose story she had so lately related : but as the ensuing scene requires fresh attention in the reader, we shall defer it till another opportunity, when his spirits shall be recruited from the fatigue of this chapter.

C H A P. XV.

Exhibiting an interview, which, it is to be hoped, will interest the curiosity of the reader.

THE mind of the delicate Aurelia was strangely agitated by the intelligence which she received, with her pocket-book, from Dolly. Confounded as she was by the nature of her situation, she at once perceived that she could not, with any regard to the dictates of gratitude, refuse complying with the request of Sir Launcelot ; but, in the first hurry of her emotion, she directed Dolly to beg, in her name, that she might be excused for wearing a masque at the interview which he desired, as she had particular reasons, which concerned her peace, for retaining that disguise. Our adventurer submitted to this preliminary with a good grace, as he had nothing in view but the injunctions of his order, and the duties of humanity ; and he was admitted without further preamble. When he entered the room, he could

not

not help being struck with the presence of Aurelia. Her stature was improved since he had seen her; her shape was exquisitely formed; and she received him with an air of dignity, which impressed him with a very sublime idea of her person and character. She was no less affected at the sight of our adventurer, who, though cased in armour, appeared with his head uncovered; and the exercise of travelling had thrown such a glow of health and vivacity on his features, which were naturally elegant and expressive, that we will venture to say, there was not in all England a couple that excelled this amiable pair in personal beauty and accomplishments. Aurelia shone with all the fabled graces of nymph or goddess; and to Sir Launcelot might be applied what the divine poet Ariosto says of the prince Zerbino:

Natura il fece e poi ruppe la stampa.

‘When Nature stamp’d him, she the dye destroy’d.’

Our adventurer, having made his obeisance to this supposed Miss Meadows, told her, with an air of pleasantry, that altho’ he thought himself highly honoured in being admitted to her presence, and allowed to pay his respects to her, as superior beings are adored, unseen; yet his pleasure would receive a very considerable addition, if she would be pleased to withdraw that invidious veil, that he might have a glimpse of the divinity which it concealed. Aurelia immediately took off her masque, saying, with a faltering accent, “I cannot be so ungrateful as to deny such a small favour to a gentleman who has laid me under the most important obligations.”

The unexpected apparition of Miss Aurelia Darnel, beaming with all the emanations of ripened beauty, blushing with all the graces of the most lovely
confusion,

confusion, could not but produce a violent effect upon the mind of Sir Launcelot Greaves. He was, indeed, overwhelmed with a mingled transport of astonishment, admiration, affliction, and awe. The colour vanished from his cheeks, and he stood gazing upon her, in silence, with the most emphatic expression of countenance. Aurelia was infected by his disorder: she began to tremble, and the roses fluctuated on her face.—“I cannot forget (said she) that I owe my life to the courage and humanity of Sir Launcelot Greaves, and that he at the same time rescued from the most dreadful death a dear and venerable parent.” “Would to Heaven she still survived! (cried our adventurer with great emotion.) She was the friend of my youth, the kind patroness of my felicity! my guardian angel forsook me when she expired! her last injunctions are deep engraven on my heart!”

While he pronounced these words, she lifted her handkerchief to her fair eyes, and, after some pause, proceeded in a tremulous tone, “I hope, Sir,—I hope you have—I should be sorry—pardon me, Sir, I cannot reflect upon such an interesting subject unmoved—” Here she fetched a deep sigh, that was accompanied with a flood of tears; while the knight continued to bend his eyes upon her with the utmost eagerness of attention. Having recollected herself a little, she endeavoured to shift the conversation: “You have been abroad since I had the pleasure to see you—I hope you were agreeably amused in your travels.” “No, Madam, (said our hero, drooping his head) I have been unfortunate.” When she, with the most enchanting sweetness of benevolence, expressed her concern to hear he had been unhappy, and her hope that his misfortunes were not past remedy; he lifted up his eyes, and fixing them upon her again with a look of tender dejection, “Cut off (said he) from the possession of what my soul held most

most dear, I wished for death, and was visited with distraction.—I have been abandoned by my reason—my youth is for ever blasted.”

The tender heart of Aurelia could bear no more—her knees began to totter: the lustre vanished from her eyes, and she fainted in the arms of her attendant. Sir Launcelot, aroused by this circumstance, assisted Dolly in seating her mistress on a couch, where she soon recovered, and saw the knight on his knees before her. “I am still happy (said he) in being able to move your compassion, though I have been held unworthy of your esteem.” “Do me justice, (she replied :) my best esteem has been always inseparably connected with the character of Sir Launcelot Greaves.”—“Is it possible? (cried our hero) then surely I have no reason to complain. If I have moved your compassion, and possess your esteem, I am but one degree short of supreme happiness—that however, is a gigantic step.—O Miss Darnel! when I remember that dear, that melancholy moment—” So saying, he gently touched her hand, in order to press it to his lips, and perceived on her finger the very individual ring which he had presented in her mother’s presence, as an interchanged testimony of plighted faith. Starting at the well known object, the sight of which conjured up a strange confusion of ideas, “This (said he) was once the pledge of something still more cordial than esteem.” Aurelia, blushing at this remark, while her eyes lightened with unusual vivacity, replied, in a fevered tone, “Sir, you best know how it lost its original signification.” “By Heaven! I do not, Madam, (exclaimed our adventurer.) With me it was ever held a sacred idea, throned within my heart, cherished with such fervency of regard, with such reverence of affection, as the devout anchorite more unreasonably pays to those sainted reliques that constitute the object of his adoration—” “And, like those reliques, (answered Miss Darnel) I have been insensible of my votary’s devotion,

devotion.—A faint I must have been, or something more, to know the sentiments of your heart by inspiration.” “Did I forbear (said he) to express, to repeat, to enforce the dictates of the purest passion that ever warmed the human breast, until I was denied access, and formally discarded by that cruel dismissal.”—“I must beg your pardon, Sir, (cried Aurelia, interrupting him hastily) I know not what you mean.”—“That fatal sentence, (said he) if not pronounced by your own lips, at least written by your own fair hand, which drove me out an exile for ever from the paradise of your affection.”—“I would not (she replied) do Sir Launcelot Greaves the injury to suppose him capable of imposition: but you talk of things to which I am an utter stranger.—I have a right, Sir, to demand of your honour, that you will not impute to me your breaking off a connection, which—I would—rather wish—had never—.” “Heaven and earth! what do I hear? (cried our impatient knight) have I not the baleful letter to produce?—What else but Miss Darnel’s explicit and express declaration could have destroyed the sweetest hope that ever cheered my soul; could obliged me to resign all claim to that felicity for which alone I wished to live; could have filled my bosom with unutterable sorrow and despair; could have even divested me of reason, and driven me from the society of men, a poor, forlorn, wandering lunatic, such as you see me now prostrate at your feet: all the blossoms of my youth withered, all the honours of my family decayed?”

Aurelia looking wistfully at her lover, “Sir, (said she) you overwhelm me with amazement and anxiety! you are imposed upon, if you have received any such letter: you are deceived, if you thought Aurelia Darnel could be so insensible, ungrateful, and—
instant.”

This last word she pronounced with some hesitation, and a downcast look, while her face under-

went

went a total suffusion, and the knight's heart began to palpitate with all the violence of emotion. He eagerly imprinted a kiss upon her hand, exclaiming, in interrupted phrase, "Can it be possible?—Heaven grant—Sure this is no illusion.—O, Madam!—shall I call you my Aurelia? My heart is bursting with a thousand fond thoughts and presages. You shall see that dire paper which hath been the source of all my woes—it is the constant companion of my travels.—Last night I nourished my chagrin with the perusal of its horrid contents."

Aurelia expressed great impatience to view the cruel forgery; for such she assured him it must be; but he could not gratify her desire till the arrival of his servant with the portmanteau. In the mean time, tea was called. The lovers were seated: he looked and languished; she flushed and faltered: all was doubt and delirium, fondness and flutter. Their mutual disorder communicated itself to the kind-hearted sympathizing Dolly, who had been witness to the interview, and deeply affected with the disclosure of the scene. Unspeakable was her surprise when she found her mistress Miss Meadows was no other than the celebrated Aurelia Darnel, whose eulogium she had heard so eloquently pronounced by her sweet-heart Mr. Thomas Clarke; a discovery which still more endeared her lady to her affection. She had wept plentifully at the progress of their mutual explanation; and was now so disconcerted, that she scarce knew the meaning of the orders she received. She set the kettle on the table, and placed the tea-board on the fire. Her confusion, by attracting the notice of her mistress, helped to relieve her from her own embarrassing situation. She, with her own delicate hands, rectified the mistake of Dolly; who still continued to sob, and said, "Yaw may think, my Leady Darnel, as haw I 'aive yeaten hool-cheese; but it y'an't soa.—I'fe think, vor maai peart, as how I'aive bean bewitched." Sir Launcelot could not help

help smiling at the simplicity of Dolly, whose goodness of heart and attachment, Aurelia did not fail to extol, as soon as her back was turned. It was in consequence of this commendation, that, the next time she entered the room, our adventurer, for the first time, considered her face, and seemed to be struck with her features. He asked her some questions, which she could not answer to his satisfaction, applauded her regard for her lady, and assured her of his friendship and protection. He now begged to know the cause that obliged his Aurelia to travel at such a rate, and in such an equipage; and she informed him of those particulars which we have already communicated to the reader.

Sir Launcelot glowed with resentment, when he understood how his dear Aurelia had been oppressed by her perfidious and cruel guardian. He bit his nether lip, rolled his eyes around, started from his seat, and striding across the room, "I remember (said he) the dying words of her who is now a saint in Heaven—"That violent man, my brother-in-law, who is Aurelia's sole guardian, will thwart her wishes with every obstacle that brutal resentment and implacable malice can contrive."—What followed, it would ill become me to repeat: but she concluded with these words—"The rest we must leave to the dispensations of Providence."—Was it not Providence that sent me hither, to guard and protect the injured Aurelia?" Then turning to Miss Darnel, whose eyes streamed with tears, he added, "Yes, divine creature! Heaven, careful of your safety, and in compassion to my sufferings, hath guided me hither, in this mysterious manner, that I might defend you from violence, and enjoy this transition from madness to deliberation, from despair to felicity." So saying he approached this amiable mourner, this fragrant flower of beauty, glittering with the dew-drops of the morning; this sweetest, and gentlest, loveliest ornament of human nature: he gazed upon her with

looks,

looks of love ineffable; he sat down by her; he pressed her soft hand in his; he began to fear that all he saw was the flattering vision of a distempered brain. He looked and sighed; and turning up his eyes to Heaven, breathed, in broken murmurs, the chaste raptures of his soul. The tenderness of this communication was too painful to be long endured. Aurelia industriously interposed other subjects of discourse, that his attention might not be dangerously overcharged, and the afternoon passed insensibly away.

Though he had determined, in his own mind, never more to quit this idol of his soul, they had not yet concerted any plan of conduct, when their happiness was all at once interrupted by a repetition of cries, denoting horror; and a servant, coming in, said, he believed some rogues were murdering a traveller on the highway. The supposition of such distress operated like gunpowder on the disposition of our adventurer, who, without considering the situation of Aurelia, and indeed without seeing, or being capable to think on her, or any other subject, for the time being, ran directly to the stable, and mounting the first horse which he found saddled, issued out in the twilight; having no other weapon but his sword. He rode full speed to the spot whence the cries seemed to proceed; but they sounded more remote as he advanced. Nevertheless he followed them to a considerable distance from the road, over fields, ditches, and hedges; and at last came so near, that he could plainly distinguish the voice of his own squire, Timothy Crabshaw, bellowing for mercy, with hideous vociferation. Stimulated by this recognition, he redoubled his career in the dark, till at length his horse plunged into a hole, the nature of which he could not comprehend; but he found it impracticable to disengage him. It was with some difficulty that he himself clambered over a ruined wall, and regained the open ground. Here he groped about, in

the utmost impatience of anxiety, ignorant of the place, mad with vexation for the fate of his unfortunate squire, and between whiles invaded with a pang of concern for Aurelia, left among strangers, unguarded, and alarmed. In the midst of this emotion, he bethought himself of hollowing aloud, that, in case he should be in the neighbourhood of any inhabited place, he might be heard and assisted. He accordingly practised this expedient, which was not altogether without effect; for he was immediately answered by an old friend, no other than his own steed Bronzomarte, who, hearing his master's voice, neighed strenuously at a small distance. The knight, being well acquainted with the sound, heard with astonishment; and, advancing in the right direction, found his noble charger fastened to a tree. He forthwith untied and mounted him; then, laying the rein, upon his neck, allowed him to chuse his own path in which he began to travel with equal steadiness and expedition. They had not proceeded far when the knight's ears were again saluted by the cries of Crabshaw; which Bronzomarte no sooner heard than he pricked up his ears, neighed, and quickened his pace, as if he had been sensible of the squire's distress, and hastened to his relief. Sir Launcelot, notwithstanding his own disquiet, could not help observing and admiring this generous sensibility of his horse: he began to think himself some hero of romance mounted on a winged steed, inspired with reason, directed by some humane inchanter, who pitied virtue in distress. All circumstances considered, it is no wonder that the commotion in the mind of our adventurer produced some such delirium. All night he continued the chase; the voice, which was repeated at intervals, still retreating before him, till the morning began to appear in the East, when, by divers piteous groans, he was directed to the corner of a wood, where he beheld his miserable squire stretched upon the grass, and

and Gilbert feeding by him altogether unconcerned, the helmet and the launce suspended at the saddle-bow, and the portmanteau safely fixed upon the crupper.

The knight, riding up to Crabshaw, with equal surprize and concern, asked what had brought him there; and Timothy, after some pause, during which he surveyed his master with a rueful aspect, answered, "The devil." "One would imagine, indeed, you had some such conveyance, (said Sir Launcelot.) I have followed your cries since last evening I know not how, nor whither, and never could come up with you till this moment. But, say, what damage have you sustained, that you lie in that wretched posture, and groan so dismally?" "I can't guess, (replied the squire) if it bean't that mai hoole carcase is drilled into oilet hools, and my flesh pinched into a jelly."—"How! wherefore? (cried the knight)—who were the miscreants that treated you in such a barbarous manner? Do you know the rustians?" "I know nothing at all, (answered the pœvish squire) but that I was tormented by vive houndred and visty thousand legions of devils, and there's an end oon't." "Well, you must have a little patience, Crabshaw—there's a salve for every sore."—"Yaw mought as well tell ma, for every zow there's a zir-reverence." "For a man in your condition, me-thinks you talk very much at your ease—Try if you can get up and mount Gilbert, that you may be conveyed to some place where you can have proper assistance.—So—well done—chearly."—

Timothy actually made an effort to rise; but fell down again, and uttered a dismal yell. Then his master exhorted him to take advantage of a park-wall by which he lay, and raise himself gradually upon it. Crabshaw, cying him askance, said, by way of reproach, for his not alighting and assisting him in person, "Thatch your house with t——d, and you'll have more teachers than reachers."—Having pro-

nounced this inelegant adage, he made shift to stand upon his legs; and now, the knight lending a hand, was mounted upon Gilbert, though not without a world of oh's! and ah's! and other ejaculations of pain and impatience. As they jogged on together, our adventurer endeavoured to learn the particulars of the disaster which had befallen the squire; but all the information he could obtain amounted to a very imperfect sketch of the adventure. By dint of a thousand interrogations, he understood, that Crabshaw had been, in the preceding evening, encountered by three persons on horseback with Venetian masques on their faces, which he mistook for their natural features, and was terrified accordingly; that they not only presented pistols to his breast, and led his horse out of the highway; but pricked him with goads, and pinched him, from time to time, till he screamed with the torture: that he was led through unfrequented places across the country, sometimes at an easy trot, sometimes at full gallop, and tormented all night by those hideous dæmons, who vanished at day-break, and left him lying on the spot where he was found by his master. This was a mystery which our hero could by no means unriddle: it was the more unaccountable, as the squire had not been robbed of his money, horse, and baggage. He was even disposed to believe, that Crabshaw's brain was disordered, and the whole account he had given, no more than a chimera. This opinion, however, he could no longer retain, when he arrived at an inn on the post-road, and found, upon examination, that Timothy's lower extremities were covered with blood, and all the rest of his body speckled with livid marks of contusion. But he was still more chagrined when the landlord informed him, that he was thirty miles distant from the place where he had left Aurelia, and that his way lay through cross-roads, which were almost impassable at that season of the year. Alarmed at this intelligence, he gave directions that his

squire

squire should be immediately conveyed to bed in a comfortable chamber, as he complained more and more; and indeed was seized with a fever, occasioned by the fatigue, the pain, and terror he had undergone. A neighbouring apothecary being called, and giving it as his opinion that he could not for some days be in a condition to travel, his master deposited a sum of money in his hands, desiring he might be properly attended, till he should hear further. Then mounting Bronzomarte, he set out with a guide for the place he had left, not without a thousand fears and perplexities, arising from the reflection of having left the jewel of his heart with such precipitation.

C H A P. XVI.

Which, it is to be hoped, the reader will find an agreeable medley of mirth and madness, sense and absurdity.

IT was not without reason that our adventurer afflicted himself: his fears were but too prophetic. When he alighted at the inn, which he had left so abruptly the preceding evening, he ran directly to the apartment where he had been so happy in Aurelia's company; but her he saw not—all was solitary. Turning to the woman of the house, who had followed him into the room, "Where is the lady?" cried he, in a tone of impatience. Mine hostess, screwing up her features into a very demure aspect, said she saw so many ladies, she could not pretend to know who he meant. "I tell thee, woman, (exclaimed the knight, in a louder accent) thou never sawest such another—I mean that miracle of beauty—" "Very like, (replied the dame, as she retired to the room-door.) Husband, here's one as axes concerning a miracle of beauty! hi, hi, hi. Can you give him any information about this miracle of beauty?—Ola! hi, hi, hi." Instead of answering

ing this question, the inn-keeper advancing, and surveying Sir Launcelot, "Friend, (said he) you are the person that carried off my horse out of the stable." "Tell me not of a horse—where is the young lady?" "Now I will tell you of the horse, and I'll make you find him too, before you and I part." "Wretched animal! how dar'st thou dally with my impatience?—Speak, or despair.—What is become of Miss Meadows? Say, did she leave this place of her own accord, or was she—hah!—speak—answer, or, by the Powers above—" "I'll answer you flat—she you call Miss Meadows is in very good hands—so you may make yourself easy on that score—" "Sacred Heaven! explain your meaning, miscreant, or I'll make you a dreadful example to all the insolent publicans of the realm." So saying, he seized him with one hand, and dashing him on the floor, set one foot on his belly, and kept him trembling in that prostrate attitude. The hostler and waiter flying to the assistance of their master, our adventurer unsheathed his sword, declaring he would dismiss their souls from their bodies, and exterminate the whole family from the face of the earth, if they would not immediately give him the satisfaction he required.

The hostess, being by this time terrified almost out of her senses, fell on her knees before him, begging he would spare their lives, and promising to declare the whole truth. He would not, however, remove his foot from the body of her husband, until she told him, that, in less than half an hour after he had sallied out upon the supposed robbers, two chaises arrived, each drawn by four horses: that two men, armed with pistols, alighting from one of them, laid violent hands upon the young lady; and, notwithstanding her struggling and shrieking, forced her into the other carriage, in which was an infirm gentleman, who called himself her guardian; that the maid was left to the care of a third servant, to follow with a third chaise, which was got ready with all possible dispatch,

dispatch, while the other two proceeded at full speed on the road to London. It was by this communicative lacquey the people of the house were informed, that the old gentleman his master was squire Darnel, the young lady his niece and ward, and our adventurer a needy sharper, who wanted to make prey of her fortune. The knight, fired even almost to frenzy by this intimation, spurned the carcase of his host; and, his eye gleaming terror, rushed into the yard in order to mount Bronzomarte, and pursue the ravisher, when he was diverted from his purpose by a new incident.

One of the postilions, who had driven the chaise in which Dolly was conveyed, happened to arrive at that instant; when seeing our hero, he ran up to him cap in hand, and, presenting a letter, accosted him in these words; "Please your noble Honour, if your Honour be Sir Launcelot Greaves of the West Riding, here's a letter from a gentlewoman, that I promised to deliver into your Honour's own hands."

The knight, snatching the letter with the utmost avidity, broke it up, and found the contents couched in these terms:

"Honoured Sir,

"The man az gi'en me leave to lat yaw know my dear leady is going to Loondon with her unkle squire Darnel.—Be not conzarned, honoured Sir, vor I'll teake it on mai laife, to let yaw know wheare we be zettled, if zo be I can find wheare you loadge in Loondon.—The man zays yaw may put it in the pooblic prints.—I houp the bareheir will be honest enuff to deliver this scrowl; and that your honour will pardon

Your umbil servannt to command

DOROTHY COWSLIP.

"P.S. Please my kained sarvice to laayer Clarke. Squire Darnel's man is very civil vor sartain; but

I've no thoughts on him I'll assure yaw.—Marry hap, worse ware may have a better chap, as the saying goes."

Nothing could be more seasonable than the delivery of this billet; which he had no sooner perused, than his reflection returned, and he entered into a serious deliberation with his own heart. He considered that Aurelia was by this time far beyond a possibility of being overtaken; and that by a precipitate pursuit he should only expose his own infirmities. He confided in the attachment of his mistress, and in the fidelity of her maid, who would find opportunities of communicating her sentiments, by the means of this lacquey, of whom he perceived by the letter she had already made a conquest. He therefore resolved to bridle his impatience, to proceed leisurely to London, and, instead of taking any rash step which might induce Anthony Darnel to remove his niece from that city, remain in seeming quiet until she should be settled, and her guardian returned to the country. Aurelia had mentioned to him the name of doctor Kawdle, and from him he expected, in due time, to receive the most interesting information.

These reflections had an instantaneous effect upon our hero, whose rage immediately subsided, and whose visage gradually resumed its natural cast of courtesy and good humour. He forthwith gratified the postilion with such a remuneration as sent him dancing into the kitchen; where he did not fail to extol the generosity and immense fortune of Sir Launcelot Greaves.

Our adventurer's next step was to see Bronzomarte properly accommodated; then he ordered a refreshment for himself, and retired into an apartment, where mine host with his wife and all the servants waited on him, to beseech his honour to forgive their impertinence, which was owing to their ignorance of his honour's quality, and the false information they had received from the gentleman's
servant.

servant. He had too much magnanimity to retain the least resentment against such inconsiderable objects. He not only pardoned them without hesitation; but assured the landlord he would be accountable for the horse, which, however, was that same evening brought home by a countryman, who had found him pounded as it were within the walls of a ruined cottage. As the knight had been greatly fatigued, without enjoying any rest for eight and forty hours, he resolved to indulge himself with one night's repose, and then return to the place where he had left his squire indisposed; for by this time even his concern for Timothy had recurred.

On a candid scrutiny of his own heart, he found himself much less unhappy than he had been before his interview with Aurelia; for, instead of being as formerly tormented with the pangs of despairing love; which had actually unsettled his understanding, he was now happily convinced that he had inspired the tender breast of Aurelia with mutual affection; and though she was invidiously snatched from his embrace, in the midst of such endearments as had wound up his soul to extasy and transport, he did not doubt of being able to rescue her from the power of an inhuman kinsman, whose guardianship would soon of course expire; and in the mean time, he rested with the most perfect dependence on her constancy and virtue.

As he next day crossed the country, ruminating on the disaster that had befallen his squire, and could now compare circumstances coolly, he easily comprehended the whole scheme of that adventure, which was no other than an artifice of Anthony Darnel and his emissaries, to draw him from the inn where he proposed to execute his design upon the innocent Aurelia. He took it for granted, that the uncle, having been made acquainted with his niece's elopement, had followed her track by the help of such informa-

tion as he received from one stage to another; and that, receiving more particulars at the White Hart touching Sir Launcelot, he had formed the scheme in which Crabshaw was an involuntary instrument towards the seduction of his master.

Amusing himself with these and other cogitations, our hero in the afternoon reached the place of his destination; and entering the inn where Timothy had been left at sick quarters, chanced to meet the apothecary retiring precipitately in a very unfavourable pickle from the chamber of his patient. When he enquired about the health of his squire, this retainer to medicine, wiping himself all the while with a napkin, answered in manifest confusion, That he apprehended him to be in a very dangerous way, from an inflammation of the *pia mater*, which had produced a most furious delirium. Then he proceeded to explain, in technical terms, the method of cure he had followed; and concluded with telling him the poor squire's brain was so outrageously disordered, that he had rejected all administration, and just thrown an urinal in his face.

The knight's humanity being alarmed at this intelligence, he resolved that Crabshaw should have the benefit of further advice, and asked if there was not a physician in the place. The apothecary, after some interjections of hesitation, owned there was a doctor in the village, an odd sort of a humourist; but he believed he had not much to do in the way of his profession, and was not much used to the forms of prescription. He was counted a scholar, to be sure; but as to his medical capacity,——he would not take upon him to say——“No matter, (cried Sir Launcelot) he may strike out some lucky thought for the benefit of the patient; and I desire you will call him instantly.”——

While the apothecary was absent on this service, our adventurer took it in his head to question the land-

lord

lord about the character of this physician, which had been so unfavourably represented, and received the following information :

" For my part, master, I knows nothing amiss of the doctor—he's a quiet sort of an inoffensive man ; uses my house sometimes, and pays for what he has, like the rest of my customers. They, says he, deals very little in physic stuff, but cures his patients with fasting and water-gruel, whereby he can't expect the pothecary to be his friend, You knows, master, one must live, and let live, as the saying is. I must say, he, for the value of three guineas, set up my wife's constitution in such a manner, that I have saved within these two years, I believe, forty pounds in pothecary's bills. But what of that ? Every man must eat, tho' at another's expence ; and I should be in a deadly hole myself, if all my customers should take it in their heads to drink nothing but water-gruel, because it is good for the constitution. Thank God, I have as good a constitution as e'er a man in England ; but for all that, I and my whole family bleed and purge, and take a diet-drink twice a-year, by way of serving the pothecary, who is a very honest man, and a very good neighbour."

Their conversation was interrupted by the return of the apothecary with the doctor, who had very little of the faculty in his appearance. He was dressed remarkably plain ; seemed to be turned of fifty ; had a careless air, and a sarcastical turn in his countenance. Before he entered the sick man's chamber, he asked some questions concerning the disease ; and when the apothecary, pointing to his own head, said, " It lies all here ;" the doctor, turning to Sir Launcelot, replied, " If that be all, there's nothing in it."

Upon a more particular enquiry about the symptoms, he was told that the blood was seemingly viscid, and salt upon the tongue ; the urine remarkably acrosaline ; and the fæces atrabilious and ferid.

When the doctor said he would engage to find the same phenomena in every healthy man of the three kingdoms, the apothecary added, that the patient was manifestly comatous, and moreover afflicted with griping pains and borborygmata.—“A f—t for your borborygmata, (cried the Physician,) What has been done?” To this question he replied, that venæsection had been three times performed; that a vesicatory had been applied *inter scapulas*; that the patient had taken occasionally of a cathartic apozem, and, between whiles, alexipharmic boluses and neutral draughts.—“Neutral, indeed, (said the doctor;) so neutral, that I’ll be crucified if ever they declare either for the patient or the disease.” So saying, he brushed into Crabshaw’s chamber, followed by our adventurer, who was almost suffocated at his first entrance. The day was close, the window-shutters were fastened; a huge fire blazed in the chimney; thick harateen curtains were close drawn round the bed, where the wretched squire lay extended under an enormous load of blankets. The nurse, who had all the exteriors of a bawd given to drink, sat stewing in this apartment, like a damned soul in some infernal bagnio: but rising when the company entered, made her curtsies with great decorum. “Well, (said the doctor) how does your patient, nurse?” “Blessed be God for it, I hope in a fair way:—to be sure his apozem has had a blessed effect—five and twenty stools since three o’clock in the morning.—But then a’would not suffer the blisters to be put upon his thighs.—Good lack! a’has been mortally obstipolous, and out of his senses all this blessed day.”—“You lie, (cried the squire) I a’n’t out of my seven senses, tho’ I’m half mad with vexation.”

The doctor having withdrawn the curtain, the hapless squire appeared very pale and ghastly; and having surveyed his master with a rueful aspect, addressed him in these words: “Sir knight, I beg a boon;

been; be pleased to tie a stone about the neck of the apothecary, and a halter about the neck of the nurse, and throw the one into the next river, and the other over the next tree, and in so doing you will do a charitable deed to your fellow-creatures; for he and she do the devil's work in partnership, and have sent many score of their betters home to him before their time." "Oh, he begins to talk sensibly." "Have a good heart, (said the physician.) What is your disorder?" "Phyick." "What do you chiefly complain of?" "The doctor." "Does your head ach?" "Yea, with impertinence." "Have you a pain in your back?" "Yes, where the blister lies." "Are you sick at stomach?" "Yes, with hunger." "Do you feel any shiverings?" "Always at sight of the apothecary." "Do you perceive any load in your bowels?" "I would the apothecary's conscience was as clear." "Are you thirsty?" "Not thirsty enough to drink barley-water." "Be pleased to look into his fauces, (said the apothecary:) he has got a rough tongue, and a very foul mouth, I'll assure you." "I have known that the case with some limbs of the faculty, where they stood more in need of correction than of physick.—Well, my honest friend, since you have already undergone the proper purgations in due form, and say you have no other disease than the doctor, we will set you on your legs again, without further question. Here, nurse, open that window, and throw these vials into the street. Now lower the curtain, without shutting the casement, that the man may not be stifled in his own steam. In the next place, take off two thirds of these coals, and one third of these blankets.—How do'st feel now, my heart?" "I should feel heart-whole, if so be as yow would throw the noorse a'ter the bottles, and the pothecary a'ter the noorse, and oorder me a pound of chops for my dinner; for I be so hoongry, I could eat a horse behind the saddle."

The

The apothecary, seeing what passed, retired of his own accord, holding up his hands in sign of astonishment. The nurse was dismissed in the same breath. Crabshaw rose, dressed himself without assistance, and made a hearty meal on the first eatable that presented itself to his view. The knight passed the evening with the physician, who, from his first appearance, concluded he was mad; but, in the course of the conversation, found means to resign that opinion, without adopting any other in lieu of it, and parted with him under all the impatience of curiosity. The knight, on his part, was very well entertained with the witty sarcasms and erudition of the doctor, who appeared to be a sort of cynic philosopher, tinctured with misanthropy, and at open war with the whole body of apothecaries, whom, however, it was by no means his interest to disoblige.

Next day, Crabshaw being to all appearance perfectly recovered, our adventurer reckoned with the apothecary, payed the landlord, and set out on his return for the London road, resolving to lay aside his armour at some distance from the metropolis: for, ever since his interview with Aurelia, his fondness for chivalry had been gradually abating. As the torrent of his despair had disordered the current of his sober reflection, so now, as that despair subsided, his thoughts began to flow deliberately in their ancient channel. All day long he regaled his imagination with plans of connubial happiness, formed on the possession of the incomparable Aurelia; determined to wait with patience, until the law should supersede the authority of her guardian, rather than adopt any violent expedient which might hazard the interest of his passion.

He had for some time travelled in the turnpike road, when his reverie was suddenly interrupted by a confused noise; and when he lifted up his eyes, he beheld at a little distance a rabble of men and women, variously armed with flails, pitchforks,

forks, poles, and muskets, acting offensively against a strange figure on horseback, who, with a kind of lance, laid about him with incredible fury. Our adventurer was not so totally abandoned by the spirit of chivalry, as to see without emotion a single knight in danger of being overpowered by such a multitude of adversaries. Without staying to put on his helmet, he ordered Crabshaw to follow him in the charge against those plebeians: then couching his lance, and giving Bronzomarte the spur, he began his career with such impetuosity as overturned all that happened to be in his way; and intimidated the rabble to such a degree, that they retired before him like a flock of sheep, the greater part of them believing he was the devil in *propria persona*. He came in the very nick of time to save the life of the other errant, against whom three loaded muskets were actually levelled, at the very instant that our adventurer began his charge. The unknown knight was so sensible of the seasonable interposition, that riding up to our hero, "Brother, (said he) this is the second time you have help me off, when I was bump ashore.—Befs Mizen, I must say, is no more than a leaky bumboat, in comparison of the glorious galley you want to man. I desire that henceforth we may cruise in the same latitudes, brother; and I'll be damned if I don't stand by you as long as I have a stick standing, or can carry a rag of canvas."

By this address our knight recognized the novice Captain Crowe, who had found means to accommodate himself with a very strange suit of armour. By way of helmet, he wore one of the caps used by the light horse, with straps buckled under his chin, and contrived in such a manner as to conceal his whole visage, except the eyes. Instead of cuirass, mail, greaves, and the other pieces of complete armour, he was cased in a postilion's leathern jerkin, covered with thin plates of tinned iron: his buckler was a pot lid, his lance a hop-pole shod with iron, and a basket-hilt broad sword, like that of Hudibras, depended

ded by a broad buff belt, that girded his middle. His feet were defended by jack-boots, and his hands by the gloves of a trooper. Sir Launcelot would not lose time in examining particulars, as he perceived some mischief had been done, and that the enemy had rallied at a distance: he therefore commanded Crowe to follow him, and rode off with great expedition; but he did not perceive that his squire was taken prisoner; nor did the captain recollect that his nephew, Tom Clarke, had been disabled and secured in the beginning of the fray. The truth is, the poor captain had been so belaboured about the pate, that it was a wonder he remembered his own name.

C H A P. XVII.

Containing adventures of chivalry, equally new and surprising.

THE knight Sir Launcelot, and the novice Crowe, retreated with equal order and expedition to the distance of half a league from the field of battle, where the former, halting, proposed to make a lodgment in a very decent house of entertainment, distinguished by the sign of St. George of Cappadocia encountering the dragon, an achievement in which temporal and spiritual chivalry were happily reconciled. Two such figures alighting at the inn-gate, did not pass through the yard unnoticed and unadmired by the guests and attendants; some of whom fairly took to their heels, on the supposition that these outlandish creatures were the avant couriers, or heralds of a French invasion. The fears and doubts, however, of those who ventured to stay were soon dispelled, when our hero accosted them in the English tongue, and with the most courteous demeanour desired to be shewn into an apartment. Had Captain
Crowe

Crowe been the spokesman, perhaps their suspicions would not have so quickly subsided; for he was, in reality, a very extraordinary novice, not only in chivalry, but also in his external appearance, and particularly in those dialects of the English language which are used by the terrestrial animals of this kingdom. He desired the hostler to take his horse in tow, and bring him to his moorings in a safe riding. He ordered the waiter, who shewed them into a parlour, to bear-a-hand, ship his oars, mind his helm, and bring along-side a short allowance of brandy or grog, that he might cant a slug into his bread-room; for there was such a heaving and pitching, that he believed he should shift his ballast. The fellow understood no part of this address but the word *brandy*, at mention of which he disappeared. Then Crowe, throwing himself into an elbow-chair, "Stop my hawse-holes, (cried he) I can't think what's the matter, brother; but, agad, my head sings and simmers like a pot of chowder.—My eye-sight yaws to and again, d'y'e see:—then there's such a walloping and whush-ing in my hold—smite my—Lord have mercy upon us.—Here you swab, ne'er mind a glass—hand me the noggin."

The latter part of this address was directed to the waiter, who had returned with a quartern of brandy, which Crowe, snatching eagerly, started into his bread-room at one cant. Indeed there was no time to be lost, inasmuch as he seemed to be on the verge of fainting away when he swallowed this cordial, by which he was instantaneously revived. He then desired the servant to unbuckle the straps of his helmet; but this was a task which the drawer could not perform, even though assisted with the good offices of Sir Launcelot: for the head and jaws were so much swelled with the discipline they had undergone, that the straps and buckles lay buried, as it were, in pits formed by the tumefaction of the adjacent parts. Fortunately for the novice, a neighbouring surgeon passed

passed by the door on horseback; a circumstance which the waiter, who saw him from the window, no sooner disclosed, than the knight had recourse to his assistance. This practitioner having viewed the whole figure, and more particularly the head of Crowe, in silent wonder, proceeded to feel his pulse; and then declared, that as the inflammation was very great, and going on with violence to its *akme*, it would be necessary to begin with copious phlebotomy, and then to empty the intestinal canal. So saying, he began to strip the arm of the captain, who perceiving his aim, 'Avast, brother, (cried he) you go the wrong way to work—you may well rummage the afterhold, when the damage is in the forecastle.—I shall right again, when my jaws are unhooped.'

With these words he drew a clasp-knife from his pocket, and, advancing to a glass, applied it so vigorously to the leather straps of his headpiece, that the Gordian-knot was cut, without any other damage to his face than a moderate scarification, which, added to the tumefaction of features, naturally strong, and a whole week's growth of a very bushy beard, produced, on the whole, a most hideous caricatura. After all, there was a necessity for the administration of the surgeon, who found divers contusions on different parts of the skull, which even the tin-cap had not been able to protect from the weapons of the rusticks.

These being shaved, and dressed *secundum artem*, and the operator dismissed with a proper acknowledgment, our knight detached one of the post-boys to the field of action for intelligence, concerning Mr. Clarke and squire Timothy; and, in the interim, desired to know the particulars of Crowe's adventures since he parted from him at the White Hart. A connected relation, in plain English, was what he had little reason to expect from the novice, who, nevertheless, exerted his faculties to the uttermost for satisfaction: he gave him to understand, that in steering

ing his course to Birmingham, where he thought of fitting himself with tackle, he had fallen in, by accident, at a public house, with an itinerant tinker, in the very act of mending a kettle: that, seeing him do his business like an able workman, he had applied to him for advice; and the tinker, after having considered the subject, had undertaken to make him such a suit of armour as neither sword nor lance should penetrate: that they adjourned to the next town, where the leather coat, the plates of tinned iron, the lance, and the broad sword were purchased, together with a copper sauce-pan, which the artist was now at work upon in converting it to a shield: but, in the mean time, the captain, being impatient to begin his career of chivalry, had accommodated himself with a pot-lid, and taken to the highway, notwithstanding all the intreaties, tears, and remonstrances of his nephew Tom Clarke, who could not however be prevailed upon to leave him in the dangerous voyage he had undertaken: that this being but the second day of his journal, he descried five or six men on horseback, bearing up full in his teeth; upon which he threw his sails a-back, and prepared for action: that he hailed them at a considerable distance, and bad them bring-to: when they came along-side, notwithstanding his hail, he ordered them to clew up their courses, and furl their top-sails, otherwise he would be foul of their quarters: that, hearing this salute, they luffed all at once, till their cloth shook in the wind: then he hollowed in a loud voice, that his sweetheart Bessie Mizzen wore the broad pendant of beauty, to which they must strike their top-sails, on pain of being sent to the bottom: that, after having eyed him for some time with astonishment, they clapped on all their sails, some of them running under his stern, and others athwart his fore-foot, and got clear off: that, not satisfied with running a-head, they all of a sudden tacked about, and one of them boarding him on the

lee-quarter, gave him such a drubbing about his upper works, that the lights danced in his lanterns; that he returned the salute with his hop-pole so effectually, that his aggressor broached to in the twinkling of an hand-spike; and then he was engaged with all the rest of the enemy, except one who sheered off, and soon returned with a mosquito fleet of small craft, who had done him considerable damage, and, in all probability, would have made prize of him, hadn't he been brought off by the knight's gallantry. He said, that in the beginning of the conflict Tom Clarke rode up to the foremost of the enemy, as he did suppose, in order to prevent hostilities; but before he got to him, near enough to hold discourse, he was pooped with a sea that almost sent him to the bottom, and then towed off he knew not whither.

Crowe had scarce finished his narration, which consisted of broken hints, and unconnected explosions of sea-terms, when a gentleman of the neighbourhood, who acted in the commission of the peace, arrived at the gate, attended by a constable, who had in custody the bodies of Thomas Clarke and Timothy Crabshaw, surrounded by five men on horseback, and an innumerable posse of men, women, and children, on foot. The captain, who always kept a good look out, no sooner descried this cavalcade and procession than he gave notice to Sir Launcelot, and advised that they should crowd away with all the cloth they could carry. Our adventurer was of another opinion, and determined at any rate to procure the enlargement of the prisoners. The justice, ordering his attendants to stay without the gate, sent his compliments to Sir Launcelot Greaves, and desired to speak with him for a few minutes. He was immediately admitted, and could not help starting at sight of Crowe, who, by this time, had no remains of the human physiognomy, so much was the swelling increased and the skin discoloured. The gentleman, whose name was Mr. Elmy, having made
a polite

a polite apology for the liberty he had taken, proceeded to unfold his business. He said, information had been lodged with him, as a justice of the peace, against two armed men on horseback, who had stopped five farmers on the king's highway, put them in fear and danger of their lives, and even assaulted, maimed, and wounded divers persons, contrary to the king's peace; and in violation of the statute: that, by the description, he supposed the knight and his companion to be the persons against whom the complaint had been lodged; and understanding his quality from Mr. Clarke, whom he had known in London, he was come to wait on him, and, if possible, effect an accommodation.

Our adventurer, having thanked him for the polite and obliging manner in which he proceeded, frankly told him the whole story, as it had been just related by the captain; and Mr. Elmy had no reason to doubt the truth of the narrative, as it confirmed every circumstance which Clarke had before reported. Indeed, Tom had been very communicative to this gentleman, and made him acquainted with the whole history of Sir Launcelot Greaves, as well as with the whimsical resolution of his uncle, Captain Crowe. Mr. Elmy now told the knight, that the persons whom the captain had stopped were farmers, returning from a neighbouring market, a set of people naturally boorish, and at that time elevated with ale to an uncommon pitch of insolence: that one of them, in particular, called Prickle, was the most quarrellsome fellow in the whole country; and so litigious, that he had maintained above thirty law-suits, in eight and twenty of them he had been condemned in costs. He said the others might be easily influenced in the way of admonition; but there was no way of dealing with Prickle, except by the form and authority of the law: he therefore proposed to hear evidence in a judicial capacity, and his clerk being in attendance,

the

the court was immediately opened in the knight's apartment.

By this time Mr. Clarke had made such good use of his time in explaining the law to his audience, and displaying the great wealth and unbounded liberality of Sir Launcelot Greaves, that he had actually brought over to his sentiments the constable and the commonalty, tag, rag, and bob-tail, and even staggered the majority of the farmers, who, at first, had breathed nothing but defiance and revenge. Farmer Stake being first called to the bar and sworn, touching the identity of Sir Launcelot Greaves and Captain Crowe, declared, that the said Crowe had stopped him on the king's highway, and put him in bodily fear: that he afterwards saw the said Crowe with a pole or weapon, value three pence, breaking the king's peace, by committing assault and battery against the heads and shoulders of his majesty's liege subjects, Geoffrey Prickle, Hodge Dolt, Richard Bumpkin, Mary Fang, Catherine Rubble, and Margery Litter; and that he saw Sir Launcelot Greaves, baronet, aiding, assisting, and comforting the said Crowe, contrary to the king's peace, and against the form of the statute.

Being asked if the defendant, when he stopped them, demanded their money, or threatened violence, he answered, he could not say, inasmuch as the defendant spoke in an unknown language. Being interrogated if the defendant did not allow them to pass without using any violence, and if they did not pass unmolested, the deponent replied in the affirmative: being required to tell for what reason they returned, and if the defendant Crowe was not assaulted before he began to use his weapon, the deponent made no answer. The depositions of farmer Bumpkin and Muggins, as well as of Madge Litter and Mary Fang, were taken much to the same purpose; and his worship earnestly exhorted them to an accommodation, observing, that they themselves were in fact the aggressors;

aggressors, and that Captain Crowe had done no more than exerted himself in his own defence.

They were all pretty well disposed to follow his advice, except farmer Prickle, who, entering the court with a bloody handkerchief about his head, declared, that the law should determine it at next 'tize; and in the mean time insisted, that the defendants should find immediate bail, or go to prison, or be set in the stocks. He affirmed, that they had been guilty of an *affray*, in appearing with armour and weapons not usually worn, to the terror of others, which is in itself a breach of the peace; but that they had, moreover, with force of arms, that is to say, with swords, staves, and other warlike instruments, by turns, made an assault and *affray*, to the terror and disturbance of him and divers subjects of our lord the king then and there being, and to the evil and pernicious example of the liege people of the said lord the king, and against the peace of our said lord the king, his crown and dignity.

This peasant had purchased a few law-terms at a considerable expence, and he thought he had a right to turn his knowledge to the annoyance of all his neighbours. Mr. Elmy, finding him obstinately deaf to all proposals of accommodation, held the defendants to very moderate bail, the landlord and the curate of the parish freely offering themselves as sureties. Mr. Clarke, with Timothy Crabshaw, against whom nothing appeared, were now set at liberty; when the former, advancing to his worship, gave information against Geoffrey Prickle, and declared upon oath, that he had seen him assault Captain Crowe, without any provocation; and when he, the deponent, interposed to prevent further mischief, the said Prickle had likewise assaulted and wounded him the deponent, and detained him for some time in false imprisonment, without warrant or authority.

In consequence of this information, which was corroborated by divers evidences, selected from the mob at the gate, the tables were turned upon Farmer Prickle, who was given to understand, that he must either find bail, or be forthwith imprisoned. This *honest* boor, who was in opulent circumstances, had made such popular use of the benefits he possessed, that there was not an housekeeper in the parish who would not have rejoiced to see him hanged. His dealings and connections however were such, that none of the other four would have refused to bail him, had not Clarke given them to understand, that, if they did, he would make them all principals and parties, and have two separate actions against each. Prickle happened to be at variance with the inn-keeper, and the curate durst not disoblige the vicar, who at that very time was suing the farmer for the small tythes. He offered to deposit a sum equal to the recognizance of the knight's bail; but this was rejected as an expedient contrary to the practice of the courts. He sent for the attorney of the village, to whom he had been a good customer; but the lawyer was hunting evidence in another county. The exciseman presented himself as a surety; but he not being an housekeeper, was not accepted. Divers cottagers, who depended on Farmer Prickle, were successively refused, because they could not prove that they had paid scot and lot, and parish taxes.

The farmer, finding himself thus forlorn, and in imminent danger of visiting the inside of a prison, was seized with a paroxysm of rage; during which he inveighed against the bench, reviled the two adventurers errant, declared that he believed, and would lay a wager of twenty guineas, that he had more money in his pocket than e'er a man in the company; and in the space of a quarter of an hour swore forty oaths, which the justice did not fail to number.

"Before we proceed to other matters, (said Mr.

Elmy)

Elmy) I order you to pay forty shillings for the oaths you have sworn; otherwise I will cause you to be set in the stocks, without further ceremony."

Prickle, throwing down a couple of guineas, with two execrations more to make up the sum, declared, that he could afford to pay for swearing as well as e'er a justice in the county; and repeated his challenge of the wager, which our adventurer now accepted, protesting at the same time, that it was not a step taken from any motive of pride, but intirely with a view to punish an insolent plebeian, who could not otherwise be chastised, without a breach of the peace. Twenty guineas being deposited on each side in the hands of Mr. Elmy, Prickle, with equal confidence and dispatch, produced a canvas bag, containing two hundred and seventy pounds, which, being spread upon the table, made a very formidable shew, that dazzled the eyes of the beholders, and induced many of them to believe he had ensured his conquest.

Our adventurer, asking if he had any thing further to offer, and being answered in the negative, drew forth, with great deliberation, a pocket-book, in which there was a considerable parcel of bank-notes, from which he selected three of one hundred pounds each, and exhibited them upon the table, to the astonishment of all present. Prickle, mad with his overthrow and loss, said it might be necessary to make him prove the notes were honestly come by; and Sir Launcelot started up, in order to take vengeance upon him for this insult; but was with-held by the arms and remonstrances of Mr. Elmy, who assured him that Prickle desired nothing so much as another broken head, to lay the foundation of a new prosecution.

The knight, calmed by this interposition, turned to the audience, saying, with the most affable deportment, "Good people, do not imagine that I intend to pocket the spoils of such a contemptible rascal. I shall beg the favour of this worthy gentleman to take

up these twenty guineas, and distribute them as he shall think proper, among the poor of the parish: but, by this benefaction, I do not hold myself acquitted for the share I had in the bruises some of you have received in this unlucky fray; and therefore I give the other twenty guineas to be divided among the sufferers, to each according to the damage he or she shall appear to have sustained; and I shall consider it as an additional obligation, if Mr. Elmy will likewise superintend this retribution."

At the close of this address, the whole yard and gate-way rung with acclamation: while honest Crowe, whose generosity was not inferior even to that of the accomplished Greaves, pulled out his purse, and declared, that as he had begun the engagement, he would at least go share and share alike in new caulking their seams, and repairing their timbers. The knight, rather than enter into a dispute with his novice, told him, he considered the twenty guineas as given by them both in conjunction, and that they would confer together on that subject hereafter.

This point being adjusted, Mr. Elmy assumed all the solemnity of the magistrate, and addressed himself to Prickle in these words: "Farmer Prickle, I am both sorry and ashamed to see a man of your years and circumstances so little respected, that you cannot find sufficient bail for forty pounds; a sure testimony that you have neither cultivated the friendship, nor deserved the good will of your neighbours. I have heard of your quarrels and your riots, your insolence, and litigious disposition; and often wished for an opportunity of giving you a proper taste of the law's correction. That opportunity now offers—You have in the hearing of all these people poured forth a torrent of abuse against me, both in the character of a gentleman and of a magistrate: your abusing me personally, perhaps I should have overlooked with the contempt it deserves; but I should ill vindicate the dignity of my office as magistrate, by
suffering

suffering you to insult the bench with impunity. I shall therefore imprison you for contempt; and you shall remain in jail, until you can find bail on the other prosecutions."

Prickle, the first transports of his anger having subsided, began to be pricked with the thorns of compunction. He was indeed exceedingly mortified at the prospect of being sent to jail so disgracefully. His countenance fell, and, after a hard internal struggle, while the clerk was employed in writing the mittimus, he said he hoped his worship would not send him to prison. He begged pardon of him and our adventurers, for having abused them in his passion; and observed, that as he had received a broken head, and paid two and twenty guineas for his folly, he could not be said to have escaped altogether without punishment, even if the plaintiff should agree to exchange releases.

Sir Launcelot, seeing this stubborn rustic effectually humbled, became an advocate in his favour with Mr. Elmy and Tom Clarke, who forgave him at his request; and a mutual release being executed, the farmer was permitted to depart. The populace were regaled at our adventurer's expence; and the men, women, and children, who had been wounded or bruised in the battle, to the number of ten or a dozen, were desired to wait upon Mr. Elmy in the morning, to receive the knight's bounty. The justice was prevailed upon to spend the evening with Sir Launcelot and his two companions, for whom supper was bespoke; but the first thing the cook prepared was a poultice for Crowe's head, which was now enlarged to a monstrous exhibition. Our knight, who was all kindness and complacency, shook Mr. Clarke by the hand, expressing his satisfaction at meeting with his old friends again, and told him softly that he had compliments for him from Mrs. Dolly Cowslip, who now lived with his Aurelia.

Clarke was confounded at this intelligence, and

after some hesitation, " Lord bless my soul!—(cried he) I'll be shot then if the pretended Miss Meadows wa'n't the same as Miss Darnel!" He then declared himself extremely glad that poor Dolly had got into such an agreeable situation, passed many warm encomiums on her goodness of heart and virtuous inclinations, and concluded with appealing to the knight whether she did not look very pretty in her green josoph. In the mean time, he procured a plaister for his own head, and helped to apply the poultice to that of his uncle, who was sent to bed betimes with a moderate dose of sack-whey, to promote perspiration. The other three passed the evening to their mutual satisfaction; and the justice in particular grew enamoured of the knight's character, dashed as it was with extravagance.

Let us now leave them to the enjoyment of a sober and rational conversation, and give some account of other guests who arrived late in the evening, and here fixed their night-quarters—But as we have already trespassed on the reader's patience, we shall give him a short respite until the next chapter makes its appearance.

CH A P. XVIII.

In which the rays of chivalry shine with renovated lustre.

OUR hero little dreamed that he had a formidable rival in the person of the knight who arrived about eleven at the sign of the St. George, and, by the noise he made, gave intimation of his importance. This was no other than squire Sycamore, who, having received advice that Miss Aurelia Darnel had eloped from the place of her retreat, immediately took the field, in quest of that lovely fugitive; hoping that, should he have the good fortune to find her in her present distress, his good offices would not be rejected. He had followed the chase so close, that, immediately

immediately after our adventurer's departure, he alighted at the inn from whence Aurelia had been conveyed; and there he learned the particulars which we have related above. Mr. Sycamore had a great deal of the childish romantic in his disposition, and, in the course of his amours, is said to have always taken more pleasure in the pursuit than in the final possession. He had heard of Sir Launcelot's extravagance, by which he was in some measure infected; and he dropped an insinuation, that he could eclipse his rival even in his own lunatic sphere. This hint was not lost upon his companion, counsellor, and buffoon, the facetious Davy Dawdle, who had some humour, and a great deal of mischief in his composition. He looked upon his patron as a fool, and his patron knew him to be both knave and fool: yet the two characters suited each other so well, that they could hardly exist asunder. Davy was an artful sycophant, but he did not flatter in the usual way; on the contrary, he behaved *en cavalier*, and treated Sycamore, on whose bounty he subsisted, with the most sarcastic familiarity. Nevertheless, he seasoned his freedom with certain qualifying ingredients that subdued the bitterness of it, and was now become so necessary to the squire, that he had no idea of enjoyment with which Dawdle was not somehow or other connected. There had been a warm dispute betwixt them about the scheme of contesting the prize with Sir Launcelot in the lists of chivalry. Sycamore had insinuated, that if he had a mind to play the fool, he could wear armour, wield a lance, and manage a charger, as well as Sir Launcelot Greaves. Dawdle snatching the hint, "I had some time ago, (said he) contrived a scheme for you, which I was afraid you had not address enough to execute—It would be no difficult matter, in imitation of the bachelor Sampson Carrasco, to go in quest of Greaves as a knight errant, defy him as a rival, and establish a compact, by which the vanquished should obey

the injunctions of the victor."—"That is my very idea," (cried Sycamore) "Your idea, (replied the other) had you ever an idea of your own conception?"—Thus the dispute began, and was maintained with great vehemence; until other arguments failing, the squire offered to lay a wager of twenty guineas. To this proposal Dawdle answered by the interjection *Pish!* which inflamed Sycamore to a repetition of the defiance.—"You are in the right (said Dawdle) to use such an argument, as you know is by me unanswerable. A wager of twenty guineas will at any time overthrow and confute all the logic of the most able syllogist, who has not got a shilling in his pocket."

Sycamore looked very grave at this declaration, and, after a short pause, said, "I wonder, Dawdle, what you do with all your money!" "I am surprised you should give yourself that trouble—I never ask what you do with yours."—"You have no occasion to ask: you know pretty well how it goes." "What! do you upbraid me with your favours?—'tis mighty well, Sycamore!"—"Nay, Dawdle, I did not intend to affront."—"Z—s! affront! what d'ye mean?"—"I'll assure you, Davy, you don't know me, if you think I could be so ungenerous as to—a—to—" "I always thought, whatever faults or foibles you might have, Sycamore, that you was not deficient in generosity,—tho' to be sure it is often very absurdly displayed." "Ay, that's one of my greatest foibles: I can't refuse even a scoundrel, when I think he is in want.—Here, Dawdle, take that note."—"Not I, Sir,—what d'ye mean?—what right have I to your notes." "Nay, but Dawdle,—come."—"By no means,—It looks like the abuse of good nature,—all the world knows you're good-natured to a fault."—"Come, dear Davy, you shall—you must oblige me."—Thus urged, Dawdle accepted the bank note with great reluctance, and restored the idea to the right owner.

A suit

A suit of armour being brought from the garret or armoury of his ancestors, he gave orders for having the pieces scoured and furnished up; and his heart dilated with joy, when he reflected upon the superb figure he should make when cased in complete steel, and armed at all points for the combat.

When he was fited with the other parts, Dawdle insisted on buckling on his helmet, which weighed fifteen pounds, and the head-piece being adjusted, made such a clatter about his ears with a cudgel, that his eyes had almost started from their sockets. His voice was lost within the vizor, and his friend affected not to understand his meaning when he made signs with his gauntlets, and endeavoured to close with him, that he might wrest the cudgel from his hand. At length he desisted, saying, "I'll warrant the helmet sound, by its ringing;" and taking it off, found the squire in a cold sweat. He would have achieved his first exploit on the spot, had his strength permitted him to assault Dawdle; but, what with want of air, and the discipline he had undergone, he had well nigh swooned away; and before he retrieved the use of his members, he was appeased by the apologies of his companion, who protested he meant nothing more than to try if the helmet was free of cracks, and whether or not it would prove a good protection for the head it covered. His excuses were accepted: the armour was packed up, and next morning Mr. Sycamore set out from his own house, accompanied by Dawdle, who undertook to perform the part of his squire at the approaching combat. He was also attended by a servant on horseback, who had charge of the armour, and another who blew the trumpet. They no sooner understood that our hero was housed at the George, than the trumpeter sounded a charge, which alarmed Sir Launcelot and his company, and disturbed honest Captain Crowe in the middle of his first sleep. Their next step was to present a challenge, which, when the stranger departed,

was by the trumpeter delivered with great ceremony into the hands of Sir Launcelot, who read it in these words: "To the knight of the Crescent, greeting. Whereas I am informed you have the presumption to lay claim to the heart of the peerless Aurelia Darnel, I give you notice that I can admit no rivalry in the affection of that paragon of beauty; and I expect that you will either resign your pretensions, or make it appear in single combat, according to the law of arms, and the institutions of chivalry, that you are worthy to dispute her favour with him of the Griffin. POLYDORE."

Our adventurer was not a little surprised at this address, which, however, he pocketed in silence; and began to reflect, not without mortification, that he was treated as a lunatic by some person who wanted to amuse himself with the infirmities of his fellow-creatures. Mr. Thomas Clarke, who saw the ceremony with which the letter was delivered, and the emotions with which it was read, hied him to the kitchen for intelligence, and there learned that the stranger was squire Sycamore. He forthwith comprehended the nature of the billet, and, in the apprehension that bloodshed would ensue, resolved to alarm his uncle, that he might assist in keeping the peace. He accordingly entered the apartment of the captain, who had been waked by the trumpet, and now peevishly asked the meaning of that damned piping, as if all hands were called upon deck. Clarke having imparted what he knew of the transaction, together with his own conjectures, the captain said, he did not suppose as how they would engage by candle-light; and that for his own part he should turn out in the larboard watch, long enough before any signals could be hove out for forming the line. With this assurance the lawyer retired to his nest, where he did not fail to dream of Mrs. Dolly Cowslip; while Sir Launcelot passed the night awake, in ruminating on the strange challenge he had received. He had

had got notice that the sander was Mr. Sycamore, and hesitated with himself whether he should not punish him for his impertinence; but when he reflected on the nature of the dispute, and the serious consequences it might produce, he resolved to decline the combat, as a trial of right and merit, founded upon absurdity. Even in his maddest hours, he never adopted those maxims of knight-errantry which related to challenges. He always perceived the folly and wickedness of desying a man to mortal fight, because he did not like the colour of his beard, or the complexion of his mistress; or of deciding by homicide, whether he or his rival deserved the preference, when it was the lady's prerogative to determine which should be the happy lover. It was his opinion that chivalry was an useful institution while confined to its original purposes of protecting the innocent, assisting the friendless, and bringing the guilty to condign punishment: but he could not conceive how these laws should be answered by violating every suggestion of reason, and every precept of humanity. Captain Crowe did not examine the matter so philosophically. He took it for granted that in the morning the two knights would come to action, and slept sound on that supposition. But he rose before it was day, resolved to be some how concerned in the fray; and understanding that the stranger had a companion, set him down immediately for his own antagonist. So impatient was he to establish this secondary contest, that by day-break he entered the chamber of Dawdle, to which he was directed by the waiter, and roused him with a hilloah, that might have been heard at the distance of half a league. Dawdle, startled by this terrific sound, sprung out of bed, and stood upright on the floor, before he opened his eyes upon the object by which he had been so dreadfully alarmed. But when he beheld the head of Crowe, so swelled and swathed, so livid, hideous, and grisly, with a broad sword by his side, and a

case of pistols in his girdle, he believed it was the apparition of some murdered man; his hair bristled up, his teeth chattered, and his knees knocked; he would have prayed, but his tongue denied its office. Crowe seeing his perturbation, "May-hap, friend, said he, you take me for a buccaneer: but I am no such person. — My name is Captain Crowe. — I come not for your silver nor your gold; your rigging nor your stowage; but hearing as how your friend intends to bring my friend Sir Launcelet Greaves to action, d'ye see; I desire in the way of friendship, that, while they are engaged, you and I as their seconds, may lie board and board for a few glasses, to divert one another, d'ye see." Dawdle hearing this request, began to retrieve his faculties, and throwing himself into the attitude of Hamlet, when the ghost appears, exclaimed in theatrical accent, "Angels and ministers of grace defend us! — Art thou a spirit of grace, or goblin damn'd?" — As he seemed to bend his eye on vacancy, the captain began to think that he really saw something preternatural, and stared wildly around. Then addressing himself to the terrified Dawdle, "Damn'd, (said he) for what should I be damn'd? If you are afraid of goblins, brother, put your trust in the Lord, and he'll prove a sheet-anchor to you." The other having by this time recollected himself perfectly, continued, notwithstanding, to spout tragedy, and in the words of Macbeth pronounced,

"What man dare, I dare:

Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The armed rhinoceros, or Hyrcanian tyger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble." —

"Ware names, Jack, (cried the impatient mariner) if so be as how you'll bear a hand and rig yourself, and take a short trip with me into the offing, we'll
overhaul

SIR LAUNCELOT GREAVES.

67

overhaul this here affair in the turning of a cap-
stan."

At this juncture they were joined by Mr. Sycamore in his night-gown and slippers. Disturbed by Crowe's first salute, he had sprung up, and now expressed no small astonishment at first sight of the novice's countenance. After having gazed alternately at him and Dawdle, "Who have we got here, said he, raw head and bloody bones?" when his friend, slipping on his cloaths, gave him to understand that this was a friend of Sir Launcelot Greaves, and explained the purport of his errand, he treated him with more civility. He assured him that he should have the pleasure to break a spear with Mr. Dawdle; and signified his surprize that Sir Launcelot had made no answer to his letter. It being by this time clear daylight, and Crowe extremely interested in this affair, he broke without ceremony into the knight's chamber, and told him abruptly that the enemy had brought to, and waited for his coming up, in order to begin the action. "I've hailed his consort, said he, a shambling chattering fellow: he took me first for a hobgoblin, then called me names, a tyger, a wrynose o'rofs, and a Persian bear; but egad, if I come athwart him, I'll make him look like the bear and ragged staff before we part.—I wool.—"

This intimation was not received with that alacrity which the captain expected to find in our adventurer, who told him in a peremptory tone, that he had no design to come to action, and desired to be left to his repose. Crowe forthwith retired crest-fallen, and muttered something which was never distinctly heard.

About eight in the morning, Mr. Dawdle brought him a formal message from the knight of the Griffin, desiring he would appoint the dils, and give security of the field. To which request he made answer in a very composed and solemn accent, "If the person who sent you thinks I have injured him, let him

without disguise, or any such ridiculous ceremony, explain the nature of the wrong; and then I shall give such satisfaction as may suit my conscience and my character. If he hath bestowed his affection upon any particular object, and looks upon me as a favoured rival, I shall not wrong the lady so much as to take any step that may prejudice her choice, especially a step that contradicts my own reason as much as it would outrage the laws of my country. If he who calls himself knight of the Griffin is really desirous of treading in the paths of true chivalry, he will not want opportunities of signalizing his valour in the cause of virtue.—Should he, notwithstanding this declaration, offer violence to me in the course of my occasions, he will always find me in a posture of defence: or, should he persist in repeating his importunities, I shall without ceremony chastise the messenger.” His declining the combat was interpreted into fear by Mr. Sycamore, who now became more insolent and ferocious, on the supposition of our knight’s timidity. Sir Launcelot meanwhile went to breakfast with his friends, and having put on his armour, ordered the horses to be brought forth. Then he paid the bill, and walking deliberately to the gate, in presence of squire Sycamore and his attendants, vaulted at one spring into the saddle of Bronzomarte, whose neighing and curvetting proclaimed the joy he felt in being mounted by his accomplished master.

Though the knight of the Griffin did not think proper to insult his rival personally, his friend Dawdle did not fail to crack some jokes on the figure and horsemanship of Crowe, who again declared he should be glad to fall in with him upon the voyage: nor did Mr. Clarke’s black patch and rueful countenance pass unnoticed and unridiculed. As for Timothy Crabshaw, he beheld his brother squire with the contempt of a veteran: and Gilbert paid him his compliments with his heels at parting; but when our adventurer

adventurer and his retinue were clear of the inn, Mr. Sycamore ordered his trumpeter to sound a retreat, by way of triumph over his antagonist. Perhaps he would have contented himself with this kind of victory, had not Dawdle further inflamed his envy and ambition, by launching out in praise of Sir Launcelot. He observed that his countenance was open and manly; his joints strong knit, and his form unexceptionable; that he trod like Hercules, and vaulted into the saddle like a winged Mercury: nay, he even hinted it was lucky for Sycamore that the knight of the Crescent happened to be so pacifically disposed. His patron sickened at these praises, and took fire at the last observation. He affected to undervalue personal beauty, though the opinion of the world had been favourable to himself in that particular: he said he was at least two inches taller than Greaves; and as to shape and air, he would make no comparisons; but with respect to riding, he was sure he had a better seat than Sir Launcelot, and would wager five hundred to fifty guineas, that he would unhorse him at the first encounter. "There is no occasion for laying wagers, replied Mr. Dawdle, the doubt may be determined in half an hour—Sir Launcelot is not a man to avoid you at full gallop." Sycamore, after some hesitation, declared he would follow and provoke him to battle, on condition that Dawdle would engage Crowe; and this condition was accepted: for, though Davy had no stomach to the trial, he could not readily find an excuse for declining it: besides, he had discovered the captain to be a very bad horseman, and resolved to eke out his own scanty valour with a border of ingenuity. The servants were immediately ordered to unpack the armour, and, in a little time, Mr. Sycamore made a very formidable appearance. But the scene that followed is too important to be huddled in at the end of a chapter; and therefore we shall

shall reserve it for a more conspicuous place in these memoirs.

CHAP. XIX.

Containing the achievements of the knights of the Griffin and Crescent.

MR. Sycamore, alias the knight of the Griffin, so denominated from a griffin painted on his shield, being armed at all points, and his friend Dawdle provided with a certain implement, which he flattered himself would ensure a victory over the novice Crowe; they set out from the George, with their attendants, in all the elevation of hope, and pranced along the highway that led towards London, that being the road which our adventurer pursued. As they were extremely well mounted, and proceeded at a round pace, they, in less than two hours, came up with Sir Launcelot and his company; and Sycamore sent another formal defiance to the knight, by his trumpeter, Dawdle having for good reasons, declined that office.

Our adventurer hearing himself thus addressed, and seeing his rival, who had passed him, posted to obstruct his progress, armed capapie, with his lance in the rest; determined to give the satisfaction that was required, and desired that the regulations of the combat might be established. The knight of the Griffin proposed, that the vanquished party should resign all pretensions to Miss Aurelia Darnel, in favour of the victor; that while the principals were engaged, his friend Dawdle should run a tilt with Captain Crowe; that squire Crabshaw, and Mr. Sycamore's servant, should keep themselves in readiness to assist their respective masters occasionally, according to the law of arms; and that Mr. Clarke should observe the

motions

motions of the trumpeter, whose province was to sound the charge to battle.

Our knight agreed to these regulations, notwithstanding the earnest and pathetic remonstrances of the young lawyer, who, with tears in his eyes, conjured all the combatants, in their turns, to refrain from an action that might be attended with bloodshed and murder; and was contrary to the laws both of God and man. In vain he endeavoured to move them by tears and entreaties, by threatening them with prosecutions in this world, and pains and penalties in the next: they persisted in their resolution, and his uncle would have begun hostilities on his carcase, had not he been prevented by Sir Launcelot, who exhorted Clarke to retire from the field, that he might not be involved in the consequences of the combat. He relished this advice so well, that he had actually moved off to some distance; but his apprehension and concern for his friends co-operating with an insatiable curiosity, detained him in sight of the engagement.

The two knights having fairly divided the ground, and the same precautions being taken by the seconds, on another part of the field, Sycamore began to be invaded with some scruples, which were probably engendered by the martial appearance, and well known character of his antagonist. The confidence which he had derived from the reluctance of Sir Launcelot now vanished, because it plainly appeared, that the knight's backwardness was not owing to personal timidity; and he foresaw that the prosecution of this joke might be attended with very serious consequences to his own life and reputation. He, therefore, desired a parley, in which he observed his affection for Miss Darnel was of such a delicate nature, that should the discomfiture of his rival contribute to make her unhappy, his victory must render him the most miserable wretch upon earth. He proposed, therefore, that

that her sentiments and choice should be ascertained before they proceeded to extremity.

Sir Launcelot declared that he was much more afraid of combating Aurelia's inclination, than of opposing the knight of the Griffin in arms; and that if he had the least reason to think Mr. Sycamore, or any other person, was distinguished by her preference, he would instantly give up his suit as desperate. At the same time, he observed that Sycamore had proceeded too far to retract; that he had insulted a gentleman, and not only challenged, but even pursued him, and blocked up his passage in the public highway; outrages which he (Sir Launcelot) would not suffer to pass unpunished. Accordingly, he insisted on the combat, on pain of treating Mr. Sycamore as a craven, and a recreant. This declaration was reinforced by Dawdle, who told him that should he now decline the engagement, all the world would look upon him as an infamous poltroon.

These two observations gave a necessary fillip to the courage of the challenger. The parties took their stations: the trumpet sounded to charge, and the combatants began their career with great impetuosity. Whether the gleam of Sir Launcelot's arms affrighted Mr. Sycamore's steed, or some other object had an unlucky effect on his eye-sight, certain it is he started at about midway, and gave his rider such a violent shake as discomposed his attitude, and disabled him from using his lance to the best advantage. Had our hero continued his career, with his lance couched, in all probability Sycamore's armour would have proved but a bad defence to his carcase: but Sir Launcelot perceiving his rival's spear unrested, had just time to throw up the point of his own, when the two horses closed with such a shock, that Sycamore, already wavering in the saddle, was overthrown, and his armour crashed around him as he fell.

The victor, seeing him lie without motion, alighted

ed

ed immediately, and began to unbuckle his helmet, in which office he was assisted by the trumpeter. When the head-piece was removed, the hapless knight of the Griffin appeared in the pale livery of death, tho' he was only in a swoon, from which he soon recovered by the effect of the fresh air, and the asperision of cold water, brought from a small pool in the neighbourhood. When he recognized his conqueror doing the offices of humanity about his person, he closed his eyes from vexation, told Sir Launcelot that his was the fortune of the day, tho' he himself owed his mischance to the fault of his own horse; and observed that this ridiculous affair would not have happened, but for the mischievous instigation of that scoundrel Dawdle, on whose ribs he threatened to revenge his mishap.

Perhaps Captain Crowe might have saved him this trouble, had that wag honourably adhered to the institutions of chivalry, in his conflict with our novice: but on this occasion, his ingenuity was more commendable than his courage. He had provided at the inn a blown bladder, in which several smooth pebbles were inclosed; and this he sily fixed on the head of his pole, when the captain obeyed the signal of battle. Instead of bearing the brunt of the encounter, he turned out of the straight line, so as to avoid the lance of his antagonist, and rattled his bladder with such effect, that Crowe's horse pricking up his ears, took to his heels, and fled across some ploughed land with such precipitation, that the rider was obliged to quit his spear, and lay fast hold on the mane, that he might not be thrown out of the saddle. Dawdle, who was much better mounted, seeing his condition, rode up to the unfortunate novice, and belaboured his shoulders without fear of retaliation. Mr. Clarke, seeing his kinsman so roughly handled, forgot his fears, and flew to his assistance; but, before he came up, the aggressor had retired, and now perceiving that fortune had declared against his

his friend and patron, very honourably abandoned him in his distress, and went off at full speed for London.

Nor was Timothy Crabshaw without his share in the noble achievements of this propitious day. He had by this time imbibed such a tincture of errantry, that he firmly believed himself and his master equally invincible; and this belief operating upon a perverse disposition, rendered him as quarrelsome in his sphere, as his master was mild and forbearing. As he sat on horseback, in the place assigned to him and Sycamore's lacquey, he managed Gilbert in such a manner, as to invade with his heels, the posteriors of the other's horse; and this insult produced some altercation, which ended in mutual assault. The footman handled the butt-end of his horse-whip with great dexterity about the head of Crabshaw, who declared afterwards, that it sung and simmered like a kettle of cod-fish: but the squire who understood the nature of long lashes, as having been a carter from his infancy, found means to twine his thong about the neck of his antagonist, and pull him off his horse half strangled, at the very instant his master was thrown by Sir Launcelot Greaves.

Having thus obtained the victory, he did not much regard the punctilios of chivalry; but taking it for granted he had a right to make the most of his advantage, resolved to carry off the *spolia opima*. Alighting with great agility, "Brother, (cried he) I think as haw-yawrs bean't a butcher's horse, a doan't carry calves well—I se make yaw know your churning days, I wool——what yaw look as if yaw was crow-trodden, you do——now, you shall pay the score you have been running on my peate, you shall, brother."

So saying, he rifled his pockets, stripped him of his hat and coat, and took possession of his master's portmanteau. But he did not long enjoy his plunder: for the lacquey complaining to Sir Launcelot of his

having

having been despoiled, the knight commanded his squire to refund, not without menaces of subjecting him to the severest chastisement, for his injustice and rapacity. Timothy represented, with great vehemence, that he had won the spoils in fair battle, at the expence of his head and shoulders, which he immediately uncovered, to prove his allegation: but his remonstrance having no effect upon his master, "Wounds! (cried he) an I mun gee thee back the pig, I'll gee thee back the poke also: I'm a drubbing, still in thy debt."

With these words, he made a most furious attack upon the plaintiff, with his horse-whip, and before the knight could interpose, repayed the lacquey with interest. As an appurtenance to Sycamore and Dawdle, he ran the risque of another assault from the novice Crowe, who was so transported with rage, at the disagreeable trick which had been played upon him, by his fugitive antagonist, that he could not for some time pronounce an articulate sound, but a few broken interjections, the meaning of which could not be ascertained. Snatching up his pole, he ran towards the place where Mr. Sycamore sat on the grass, supported by the trumpeter, and would have finished what our adventurer had left undone, if the knight of the Crescent, with admirable dexterity, had not warded off the blow which he aimed at the knight of the Griffin, and signified his displeasure in a resolute tone: then he collared the lacquey, who was just disengaged from the chastising hand of Crabshaw, and swinging his lance with his other hand, encountered the squire's ribs by accident.

Timothy was not slow in returning the salutation, with the weapon which he still wielded: Mr. Clarke, running up to the assistance of his uncle, was opposed by the lacquey, who seemed extremely desirous of seeing the enemy revenge his quarrel, by falling foul of one another. Clarke, thus impeded, commenced hostilities against the footman, while Crowe grappled with

with Crabshaw; a battle-royal ensued, and was maintained with great vigour, and some bloodshed on all sides, until the authority of Sir Launcelot, reinforced by some weighty remonstrances, applied to the squire, put an end to the conflict. Crabshaw immediately desisted, and ran roaring to communicate his grievances to Gilbert, who seemed to sympathize very little with his distress. The lacquey took to his heels; Mr. Clarke wiped his bloody nose, declaring he had a good mind to put the aggressor in the Crown-office; and Captain Crowe continued to ejaculate unconnected oaths, which, however, seemed to imply that he was almost sick of his new profession.

"D—n my eyes, if you call this——start my timbers, brother——look ye, d'ye see——a lousy, lubberly, cowardly son of a——among the breakers, d'ye see——lost my steerage way——split my binnacle; haul away——O! damn all arrantry——give me a tight vessel, d'ye see, brother——mayhap you may'nt——snatch my——sea room and a spanking gale——odds heart, I'll hold a whole year's——finite my limbs: it don't signify talking."

Our hero consoled the novice for his disaster, by observing, that if he had got some blows, he had lost no honour. At the same time, he observed that it was very difficult, if not impossible, for a man to succeed in the paths of chivalry, who had passed the better part of his days in other occupations; and hinted that as the cause which had engaged him in this way of life no longer existed, he was determined to relinquish a profession, which, in a peculiar manner, exposed him to the most disagreeable incidents. Crowe chewed the cud upon this insinuation, while the other personages of the Drama were employed in catching the horses, which had given their riders the slip. As for Mr. Sycamore, he was so bruised by his fall, that it was necessary to procure a litter for conveying him to the next town, and the servant was dispatched

dispatched for this convenience; Sir Launcelot staying with him until it arrived.

When he was safely deposited in the carriage, our hero took leave of him in these terms. "I shall not insist upon your submitting to the terms you yourself proposed before this rencounter. I give you free leave to use all your advantages, in an honourable way, for promoting your suit with the young lady, of whom you profess yourself enamoured. Should you have recourse to sinister practices, you will find Sir Launcelot Greaves ready to demand an account of your conduct, not in the character of a lunatic knight-errant, but as a plain English gentleman, jealous of his honour, and resolute in his purpose."

To this address Mr. Sycamore made no reply, but with a sullen aspect ordered the carriage to proceed; and it moved accordingly to the right, our hero's road to London lying in the other direction. Sir Launcelot had already exchanged his armour for a riding-coat, hat, and boots; and Crowe parting with his skull-cap and leathern jerkin, regained in some respects the appearance of a human creature. Thus metamorphosed, they pursued their way in an easy pace, Mr. Clarke endeavouring to amuse them with a learned dissertation on the law, tending to demonstrate that Mr. Sycamore was, by his behaviour of that day, liable to three different actions, besides a commission of lunacy; and that Dawdle might be prosecuted for having practised subtle craft, to the annoyance of his uncle, over and above an action for assault and battery; because, for why? The said Crowe having run away, as might be easily proved, before any blows were given, the said Dawdle by pursuing him even out of the high road, putting him in fear, and committing battery on his body, became, to all intents and purposes, the aggressor; and an indictment would lie in *Banco Regis*.

The Captain's pride was so shocked at these observations, that he exclaimed with equal rage and impatience,

patience, "You lie, you dog, in *Bilhum Regis*—you lie, I say, you lubber, I did not run away; nor was I in fear, d'ye see. It was my son of a bitch of a horse that would not obey the helm, d'ye see, whereby I couldn't use my metal, d'ye see—As for the matter of fear, you and fear may kiss my— So don't go and heave your stink pots at my character, d'ye see, or agad I'll trim thee fore and aft with a—I wool." Tom protested he meant nothing but a little speculation, and Crowe was appeased.

In the evening they reached the town of Bugden without any farther adventure, and passed the night in great tranquility. Next morning, even after the horses were ordered to be faddled, Mr. Clarke, without ceremony, entered the apartment of Sir Launcelot, leading in a female, who proved to be the identical Mrs. Dolly Cowslip. This young woman advancing to the knight, cried, "O, Sir Launcelot! my dear leady, my dear leady"—but was hindered from proceeding by a flood of tears which the tender hearted lawyer mingled with a plentiful shower of sympathy.

Our adventurer starting at this exclamation, "O Heavens! (cried he) where is my Aurelia? speak, where did you leave that jewel of my soul? answer me in a moment—I am all terror and impatience!" Dolly having recollected herself, told him that Mr. Darnel had lodged his niece in the new buildings by May-fair; that on the second night after their arrival, a very warm expostulation had passed between Aurelia and her uncle, who next morning dismissed Dolly, without permitting her to take leave of her mistress, and that same day moved to another part of the town, as she afterwards learned of the landlady, though she could not inform her whither they were gone. That when she was turned away, John Clump, one of the footmen, who pretended to have a kindness for her, had faithfully promised to call upon her, and let her know what passed in the family;

family; but as he did not keep his word, and she was an utter stranger in London, without friends or settlement, she had resolved to return to her mother, and travelled so far on foot since yesterday morning.

Our knight, who had expected the most dismal tidings from her lamentable preamble, was pleased to find his presaging fears disappointed; though he was far from being satisfied with the dismissal of Dolly, from whose attachment to his interest, joined to her influence over Mr. Clump, he had hoped to reap such intelligence as would guide him to the haven of his desires. After a minute's reflection, he saw it would be expedient to carry back Mrs. Cowslip, and lodge her at the place where Mr. Clump had promised to visit her with intelligence; for, in all probability, it was not for want of inclination that he had not kept his promise.

Dolly did not express any aversion to the scheme of returning to London, where she hoped once more to rejoin her dear lady, to whom by this time, she was attached by the strongest ties of affection; and her inclination, in this respect, was assisted by the consideration of having the company of the young lawyer, who, it plainly appeared, had made strange havock in her heart, though it must be owned, for the honour of this blooming damsel, that her thoughts had never once deviated from the paths of innocence and virtue. The more Sir Launcelot surveyed this agreeable maiden, the more he felt himself disposed to take care of her fortune; and from this day he began to ruminate on a scheme which was afterwards consummated in her favour.—In the mean time, he laid injunctions on Mr. Clarke to conduct his addresses to Mrs. Cowslip, according to the rules of honour and decorum, as he valued his countenance and friendship. His next step was to procure a saddle-horse for Dolly, who preferred this to any other sort of carriage; and thereby gratified the wish of her admirer,

admirer, who longed to see her on horseback in her green Joseph.

The armour, including the accoutrements of the novice and the squire, were left in the care of the inn-keeper, and Timothy Crabshaw was so metamorphosed by a plain livery-frock, that even Gilbert with difficulty recognized his person. As for the novice Crowe, his head had almost resumed its natural dimensions; but then his whole face was so covered with a livid suffusion; his nose appeared so flat, and his lips so tumified, that he might very well have passed for a Caffre or Ethiopian. Every circumstance being now adjusted, they departed from Bugden in a regular cavalcade, dined at Hatfield, and in the evening arrived at the Bull and Gate inn in Holborn, where they established their quarters for the night.

C H A P. XX.

In which our Hero descends into the mansions of the Damned.

THE first step which Sir Launcelot took in the morning that succeeded his arrival in London, was to settle Mrs. Dolly Cowslip in lodgings at the house where John Clump had promised to visit her; as he did not doubt, that though the visit was delayed, it would some time or other be performed; and in that case, he might obtain some intelligence of Aurlia. Mr. Thomas Clarke was permitted to take up his habitation in the same house, on his earnestly desiring he might be intrusted with the office of conveying information and instruction between Dolly and our adventurer. The knight himself resolved to live retired until he should receive some tidings relating to Miss Darnel, that would influence his conduct;

but he proposed to frequent places of public resort incognito, that he might have some chance of meeting by accident with the mistress of his heart. Taking it for granted that the oddities of Crowe would help to amuse him in his hours of solitude and dis-appointmen, he invited that original to be his guest, at a small house which he determined to hire ready furnished in the neighbourhood of Golden-square. The captain thanked him for his courtesy, and frankly embraced his offer; though he did not much approve of the knight's choice, in point of situation. He said he would recommend him to a special good upper-deck hard by St. Catharine's in Wapping, where he would be delighted with the prospect of the street forwards, well frequented by passengers, carts, drays, and other carriages; and having backwards, an agreeable view of alderman Parsons' great brewhouse, with two hundred hogs feeding almost under the window. As a further inducement, he mentioned the vicinity of the Tower guns, which would regale his hearing on days of salutation: nor did he forget the sweet sound of mooring and un-mooring ships in the river, and the pleasing objects on the other side of the Thames, displayed in the oozy docks and cabbage-gardens of Rotherhithe. Sir Launcelot was not insensible to the beauties of this landscape; but his pursuit lying another way, he contented himself with a less enchanting situation, and Crowe accompanied him out of pure friendship. At night Mr. Clarke arrived at our hero's house with tidings that were by no means agreeable. He told him that Clump had left a letter for Dolly, informing her that his master Squire Darnel was to set out early in the morning for Yorkshire; but he could give no account of her lady, who had, the day before, been conveyed, he knew not whither, in a hackney-coach, attended by his uncle and an ill-looking fellow, who had much the appearance of a bailiff or turnkey: so that he feared she was in trouble.

Sir Launcelot was deeply affected by this intimation. His apprehension was even roused by a suspicion that a man of Darnel's violent temper, and unprincipled heart, might have practised upon the life of his lovely niece: but, upon recollection, he could not suppose that he had recourse to such infamous expedients, knowing, as he did, that an account of her would be demanded at his hands, and that it would be easily proved he had conveyed her from the lodging in which she resided. His first fears now gave way to another suggestion, that Anthony, in order to intimidate her into a compliance with his proposals, had trumped up a spurious claim against her, and by virtue of a writ confined her in some prison or spunging-house. Possessed with this idea, he desired Mr. Clarke to search the sheriff's office in the morning, that he might know whether any such writ had been granted; and he himself resolved to make a tour of the great prisons belonging to the metropolis, to enquire if perchance she might not be confined under a borrowed name. Finally, he determined, if possible, to apprise her of his place of abode by a paragraph in all the daily papers, signifying that Sir Launcelot Greaves had arrived at his house by Golden-square.

All these resolutions were punctually executed. No such writ had been taken out in the sheriff's office; and therefore, our hero set out on his jail expedition, accompanied by Mr. Clarke, who had contracted some acquaintance with the commanding officers in these garrisons, in the course of his clerkship, and practice as an attorney. The first day they spent in prosecuting their inquiry through the Gate-house, Fleet, and Marshalsea; the next they allotted to the King's-bench, where they understood there was a great variety of prisoners. There they proposed to make a minute scrutiny, by the help of Mr. Norton, the deputy-marshal, who was Mr. Clarke's intimate friend, and had nothing

at all of jailor either in his appearance or in his disposition, which was remarkably humane and benevolent towards all his fellow-creatures.

The knight having bespoke dinner at a tavern in the Borough, was, together with Captain Crowe, conducted to the prison of the King's-Bench, which is situated in St. George's-fields, about a mile from the end of Westminster-bridge, and appears like a neat little regular town, consisting of one street, surrounded by a very high wall, including an open piece of ground which may be termed a garden, where the prisoners take the air, and amuse themselves with a variety of diversions. Except the entrance, where the turnkeys keep watch and ward, there is nothing in the place that looks like a jail, or bears the least colour of restraint. The street is crowded with passengers. Tradesmen of all kinds here exercise their different professions. Hawkers of all sorts are admitted to call and vend their wares as in any open street of London. Here are butchers-stands, chandlers-shops, a surgery, a tap-house well frequented, and a public kitchen in which provisions are dressed for all the prisoners gratis, at the expence of the publican. Here the voice of misery never complains, and, indeed, little else is to be heard but the sounds of mirth and jollity. At the farther end of the street, on the right hand, is a little paved court leading to a separate building, consisting of twelve large apartments, called state-rooms, well furnished, and fitted up for the reception of the better sort of crown-prisoners; and on the other side of the street, facing a separate division of ground, called the common side, is a range of rooms occupied by prisoners of the lowest orders, who share the profits of a begging-box, and are maintained by this practice, and some established funds of charity. We ought also to observe, that the jail is provided with a neat chapel, in

which a clergyman, in consideration of a certain salary, performs divine service every Sunday.

Our adventurer having searched the books, and perused the description of all the female prisoners who had been for some weeks admitted into jail, obtained not the least intelligence of his concealed charmer, but resolved to alleviate his disappointment by the gratification of his curiosity. Under the auspices of Mr. Norton, he made a tour of the prison, and in particular visited the kitchen, where he saw a number of spits loaded with a variety of provision, consisting of butcher's meat, poultry, and game: he could not help expressing his astonishment with up-lifted hands, and congratulating himself in secret, upon his being a member of that community which had provided such a comfortable asylum for the unfortunate. His ejaculation was interrupted by a tumultuous noise in the street; and Mr. Norton declaring he was sent for to the lodge, consigned our hero to the care of one Mr. Felton, a prisoner of a very decent appearance, and invited the company to repose themselves in his apartment, which was large, commodious, and well furnished. When Sir Launcelot asked the cause of that uproar, he told him that it was the prelude to a boxing match between two of the prisoners, to be decided in the ground or garden of the place.

Captain Crowe expressing an eager curiosity to see the battle, Mr. Felton assured him there would be no sport, as the combatants were both reckoned dunghills: "But, in half an hour (said he) there will be a battle of some consequence between two of the demagogues of the place, Dr. Crabclaw and Mr. Tapley, the first a physician, and the other a brewer. You must know, Gentlemen, that this microcosm or republic in miniature, is like the great world, split into factions. Crabclaw is the leader of one party; and the other is headed by Tapley; both are men of

warm

warm and impetuous tempers; and their intrigues have embroiled the whole place, insomuch that it was dangerous to walk the street, on account of the continual skirmishes of their partizans. At length, some of the more sedate inhabitants having met and deliberated upon some remedy for these growing disorders, proposed that the dispute should be at once decided by single combat between the two chiefs, who readily agreed to the proposal. The match was accordingly made for five guineas, and this very day and hour appointed for the trial, on which considerable sums of money are depending. As for Mr. Norton, it is not proper that he should be present, or seem to countenance such violent proceedings, which, however, it is necessary to connive at, as convenient vents for the evaporation of those humours, which being confined, might accumulate and break out with greater fury, in conspiracy and rebellion."

The knight owned he could not conceive by what means such a number of licentious people, amounting, with their dependants, to above five hundred, were restrained within the bounds of any tolerable discipline, or prevented from making their escape; which they might at any time accomplish, either by stealth or open violence, as it could not be supposed, that one or two turnkeys, continually employed in opening and shutting the door, could resist the efforts of a whole multitude. "Your wonder, good Sir, (said Mr. Felton) will vanish, when you consider it is hardly possible that the multitude should co-operate in the execution of such a scheme; and that the keeper perfectly well understands the maxim *divide et impera*. Many prisoners are restrained by the dictates of gratitude towards the deputy-marshal, whose friendship and good offices they have experienced: some, no doubt, are actuated by motives of discretion. One party is an effectual check upon the other; and I am firmly persuaded that there are not

ten prisoners within the place that would make their escape, if the doors were laid open. This is a step which no man would take, unless his fortune was altogether desperate; because it would oblige him to leave his country for life, and expose him to the most imminent risque of being retaken and treated with the utmost severity. The majority of the prisoners live in the most lively hope of being released by the assistance of their friends, the compassion of their creditors, or the favour of the legislature. Some who are cut off from all these proposals, are become naturalized to the place, knowing they cannot subsist in any other situation. I, myself, am one of these. After having resigned all my effects for the benefit of my creditors, I have been detained these nine years in prison, because one person refuses to sign my certificate. I have long outlived all my friends from whom I could expect the least countenance or favour: I am grown old in confinement; and lay my account with ending my days in jail, as the mercy of the legislature in favour of insolvent debtors, is never extended to uncertified bankrupts taken in execution. By dint of industry, and the most rigid economy, I make shift to live independant in this retreat. To this scene my faculty of subsisting, as well as my body, is peculiarly confined. Had I an opportunity to escape, where should I go? All my views of fortune have been long blasted. I have no friends nor connexions in the world. I must, therefore, starve in some sequestered corner, or be recaptured and confined for ever to close prison, deprived of the indulgences which I now enjoy."

Here the conversation was broke off by another uproar, which was the signal to battle between the doctor and his antagonist. The company immediately adjourned to the field, where the combatants were already undressed and the stakes deposited. The doctor seemed of the middle age and middle stature, active and alert, with an atrebilious aspect, and a mixture

mixture of rage and disdain expressed in his countenance. The brewer was large, raw-boned, and round as a butt of beer, but very fat, unwieldy, short-winded and phlegmatic. Our adventurer was not a little surprised when he beheld in the character of seconds, a male and a female stripped naked from the waist upwards, the latter ranging on the side of the physician: but the commencement of the battle prevented his demanding of his guide an explanation of this phenomenon. The doctor, retiring some paces backwards, threw himself into the attitude of a battering ram, and rushed upon his antagonist with great impetuosity, foreseeing that should he have the good fortune to over-turn him in the first assault, it would not be an easy task to raise him up again, and put him in a capacity of offence. But the momentum of Crabclaw's head, and the concomitant efforts of his knuckles, had no effect upon the ribs of Tapley, who stood firm as the Acroceraunian promontory: and stepping forward with his projected fist, something smaller and softer than a sledge-hammer, struck the physician to the ground. In a trice, however, by the assistance of his female second, he was on his legs again, and grappling with his antagonist, endeavoured to tip him a fall; but, instead of accomplishing his purpose, he received a cross-buttock, and the brewer throwing himself upon him as he fell, had well-nigh smothered him on the spot. The amazon flew to his assistance, and Tapley shewing no inclination to get up, she smote him on the temple till he roared. The male second hastening to the relief of his principal, made application to the eyes of the female, which were immediately surrounded with black circles; and she returned the salute with a blow which brought a double stream of blood from his nostrils, greeting him at the same time with the opprobrious appellation of a lousy son of a b—h. A combat more furious than the first would now have ensued, had not Felton interposed with an air of

authority, and insisted on the man's leaving the field; an injunction which he forthwith obeyed, saying, "Well, damme, Felton, you're my friend and commander: I'll obey your order—but the b—h will be foul of me before we sleep—." Then Felton, advancing to his opponent, "Madam, (said he) I'm very sorry to see a lady of your rank and qualifications expose yourself in this manner.—For God's sake, behave with a little more decorum; if not for the sake of your own family, at least for the credit of your sex in general." "Hark ye, Felton, (said she) decorum is founded upon a delicacy of sentiment and deportment, which cannot consist with the disgraces of a jail, and the miseries of indigence.—But I see the dispute is now terminated, and the money is to be drank: if you'll dine with us you shall be welcome: if not, you may die in your sobriety, and be damned."

By this time the doctor had given out, and allowed the brewer to be the better man; yet he would not honour the festival with his presence, but retired to his chamber, exceedingly mortified at his defeat. Our hero was reconducted to Mr. Felton's apartment, where he sat some time without opening his mouth, so astonished he was at what he had seen and heard. "I perceive, Sir, (said the prisoner) you are surpris'd at the manner in which I accosted that unhappy woman; and perhaps you will be more surpris'd when you hear, that within these eighteen months, she was actually a person of fashion, and her opponent (who by the bye) is her husband, universally respected as a man of honour, and a brave officer." "I am, indeed, (cried our hero) overwhelmed with amazement and concern, as well as stimulated by an eager curiosity to know the fatal causes which have produced such a deplorable reverse of character and fortune. But I will rein my curiosity till the afternoon, if you will favour me with your company at a tavern in the neighbourhood, where

where I have bespoke dinner; a favour which I hope Mr. Norton will have no objection to your granting, as he himself is to be of the party."—The prisoner thanked him for his kind invitation, and they adjourned immediately to the place, taking up the deputy-marshal in their passage through the lodge or entrance of the prison.

C H A P. XX.

Containing further anecdotes relating to the children of wretchedness.

DINNER being cheerfully discussed, and our adventurer expressing an eager desire to know the history of the male and female who had acted as 'squires or seconds to the champions of the King's-Bench, Felton gratified his curiosity to this effect:

"All that I know of Captain Clewlin, previous to his commitment, is, that he was commander of a sloop of war, and bore the reputation of a gallant officer; that he married the daughter of a rich merchant in the city of London against the inclination, and without the knowledge of her father, who renounced her for this act of disobedience; that the captain consoled himself for the rigour of the parent with the possession of the lady, who was not only remarkably beautiful in person, but highly accomplished in her mind, and amiable in her disposition. Such, a few months ago, were those two persons whom you saw acting in such a vulgar capacity. When they first entered the prison they were undoubtedly the handsomest couple mine eyes ever beheld, and their appearance won universal respect even from the most brutal inhabitants of the jail. The captain having unwarily involved himself as security for a man to whom he had lain under obligations, became liable for a considerable sum; and

his own father-in-law being the sole creditor of the bankrupt, took this opportunity of wreaking vengeance upon him for having espoused his daughter. He watched an opportunity until the captain had actually stepped into the post-chaise with his lady for Portsmouth, where his ship lay, and caused him to be arrested in the most public and shameful manner. Mrs. Clewlin had like to have sunk under the first transports of her grief and mortification; but these subsiding, she had recourse to personal solicitation. She went with her only child in her arms (a lovely boy) to her father's door, and being denied admittance, kneeled down in the street, imploring his compassion in the most pathetic strain; but this hard-hearted citizen, instead of recognizing his child, and taking the poor mourner to his bosom, insulted her from the window with the most bitter reproach, saying, among other shocking expressions, "Stumpet, take yourself away, with your brat, otherwise I shall send for the beadle, and have you to Bridewell."

The unfortunate lady was cut to the heart by this usage, and fainted in the street; from whence she was conveyed to a public house by the charity of some passengers. She afterwards attempted to soften the barbarity of her father, by repeated letters, and by interesting some of his friends to intercede with him in her behalf; but all her endeavours proved ineffectual, she accompanied her husband to the prison of the King's-Bench, where she must have felt, in the severest manner, the fatal reverse of circumstance to which she was exposed. The captain being disabled from going to sea, was superseded, and he saw all his hopes blasted in the midst of an active war, at a time when he had the fairest prospects of fame and fortune. He saw himself reduced to extreme poverty, cooped up with the tender partner of his heart in a wretched hovel, amidst the refuse of mankind, and on the brink of wanting the common necessities

necessities of life. The mind of man is ever ingenious in finding resources. He comforted his lady with vain hopes of having friends who would effect his deliverance, and repeated assurances of this kind so long, that he at length began to think they were not altogether void of foundation.

Mrs. Clewlin, from a principle of duty, recollected all her fortitude, that she might not only bear her fate with patience, but even contributed to alleviate the woes of her husband, whom her affection had ruined. She affected to believe the suggestions of his pretended hope; she interchanged with him assurances of better fortune; her appearance exhibited a calm, while her heart was torn with anguish. She assisted him in writing letters to former friends, the last consolation of the wretched prisoner; she delivered these letters with her own hand, and underwent a thousand mortifying repulses, the most shocking circumstances of which she concealed from her husband. She performed all the menial offices in her own little family, which was maintained by pawning her apparel; and both the husband and wife, in some measure, sweetened their cares, by prattling and toying with their charming little boy, on whom they doated with an enthusiasm of fondness.—Yet even this pleasure was mingled with the most tender and melancholy regret. I have seen the mother hang over him, with the most affecting expression of this kind in her aspect, the tears contending with the smiles upon her countenance, while she exclaimed: Alas! my poor prisoner, little did your mother once think she should be obliged to nurse you in a jail." The captain's paternal love was dashed with impatience—He would snatch up the boy in a transport of grief, press him to his breast, devour him as it were with kisses, throw up his eyes to heaven in the most emphatic silence; then convey the child hastily to his mother's arms, pull his hat over his eyes, stalk out into the com-

mon walk, and finding himself alone, broke out into tears and lamentations.

Ah ! little did this unhappy couple know what further griefs awaited them ! The small-pox broke out in the prison, and poor Tommy Clewlin was infected. As the eruption appeared unfavourable, you may conceive the consternation with which they were overwhelmed. Their distress was rendered inconceivable by indigence ; for, by this time, they were so destitute that they could neither pay for common attendance, nor procure proper advice. I did on that occasion, what I thought my duty towards my fellow-creatures.—I wrote to a physician of my acquaintance, who was humane enough to visit the poor little patient : I engaged a careful woman prisoner as a nurse, and Mr. Norton supplied them with money and necessaries. These helps were barely sufficient to preserve them from the horrors of despair, when they saw their little darling panting under the rage of a loathsome pestilential malady, during the excessive heat of the dog-days, and struggling for breath in the noxious atmosphere of a confined cabin, where they scarce had room to turn, on the most necessary occasions. The eager curiosity with which the mother eyed the doctor's looks as often as he visited the boy ; the terror and trepidation of the father, while he desired to know his opinion ; in a word, the whole tenour of their distress baffled all description.

At length, the physician, for the sake of his own character, was obliged to be explicit ; and returning with the captain to the common walk, told him, in my hearing, that the child could not possibly recover.—This sentence seemed to have petrified the unfortunate parent, who stood motionless, and seemingly bereft of sense. I led him to my apartment, where he sat a full hour in that state of stupefaction ; then he began to groan hideously ; a shower of tears burst from his eyes ; he threw himself on the floor,
and

and uttered the most piteous lamentation that ever was heard. Mean while, Mrs. Norton being made acquainted with the doctor's prognostic, visited Mrs. Blewlin, and invited her to the lodge. Her prophetic fears immediately took the alarm. "What! (cried she, starting up with a frantic wildness in her looks) then our case is desperate—I shall lose my dear Tommy!—the poor prisoner will be released by the hand of Heaven!—Death will convey him to the cold grave!"—The dying innocent hearing this exclamation, pronounced these words: "Tommy won't leave you, my dear mamma—if Death comes to take Tommy, papa shall drive him away with his sword." This address deprived the wretched mother of all resignation to the will of Providence. She tore her hair, dashed herself on the pavement, shrieked aloud, and was carried off in a deplorable state of distraction.

That same evening the lovely babe expired, and the father grew frantic. He made an attempt on his own life; and being with difficulty restrained, his agitation sunk into a kind of sudden insensibility, which seemed to absorb all sentiment, and gradually vulgarized his faculty of thinking. In order to dissipate the violence of his sorrow, he continually shifted the scene from one company to another, contracted abundance of low connexions, and drowned his cares in repeated intoxication. The unhappy lady underwent a long series of hysterical fits and other complaints, which seemed to have a fatal effect on her brain as well as constitution. Cordials were administered to keep up her spirits; and she found it necessary to protract the use of them to blunt the edge of grief, by overwhelming reflection, and remove the sense of uneasiness arising from a disorder in her stomach. In a word, she became an habitual dram-drinker; and this practice exposed her to such communication as debauched her reason, and perverted her sense of decorum and propriety. She and her husband

husband gave a loose to vulgar excess, in which they were enabled to indulge by the charity and interest of some friends, who obtained half-pay for the captain. They are now metamorphosed into the shocking creatures you have seen; he into a riotous plebeian, and she into a ragged trull. They are both drunk every day, quarrel and fight one with another, and often insult their fellow-prisoners. Yet they are not wholly abandoned by virtue and humanity. The captain is scrupulously honest in all his dealings, and pays off his debts punctually every quarter, as soon as he receives his half-pay. Every prisoner in distress is welcome to share his money while it lasts; and his wife never fails, while it is in her power, to relieve the wretched; so that their generosity, even in this miserable disguise, is universally respected by their neighbours. Sometimes the recollection of their former rank comes over them like a qualm, which they dispel with brandy, and then humourously rally one another on their mutual degeneracy. She often stops me in the walk, and, pointing to the captain, says, "My husband, tho' is become a black-guard jail-bird, must be allowed to be an handsome fellow still."—On the other hand, he will frequently desire me to take notice of his rib, as she chances to pass.—"Mind that draggel-tail'd drunken drab — (he will say) what an antidote it is—yet, for all that, Felton, she was a fine woman when I married her——Poor Bess, I have been the ruin of her, that is certain, and deserve to be damned for bringing her to this pass."

Thus they accommodate themselves to each other's infirmities, and pass their time not without some taste of plebeian enjoyment——but, name their child, they never fail to burst into tears, and still feel a return of the most poignant sorrow."

Sir Launcelot Greaves did not hear this story unmoved. Tom Clark's cheeks were bedewed with the drops of sympathy, while with much sobbing, he declared his opinion, that an action would lie
against

against the lady's father.—Captain Crowe having listened to the story with uncommon attention, expressed his concern that an honest seaman should be so taken in stays : but he imputed all the calamity to the wife : “ For why ! (said he) a sea-faring man may have a sweetheart in every port ; but he should steer clear of a wife, as he would avoid a quick-sand.— You see, brother, how this here Clewlin lags astern in the wake of a sniveling b—— ; otherwise he would never make a west in his ensign for the loss of a child—Odds heart ! he could have done no more if he had sprung a top-mast, or started a timber.—”

The knight declaring that he would take another view of the prison in the afternoon, Mr. Felton insisted upon his doing him the honour to drink a dish a tea in his apartment, and Sir Launcelot accepted his invitation. Thither they accordingly repaired, after having made another circuit of the jail, and the tea-things were produced by Mrs. Felton, when she was summoned to the door, and in a few minutes returning, communicated something in a whisper to her husband. He changed colour, and repaired to the stair-case, where he was heard to talk aloud in an angry tone. When he came back, he told the company he had been teased by a very importunate beggar. Addressing himself to our adventurer, “ You took notice (says he) of a fine lady flaunting about our walk in all the frippery of the fashion.—She was lately a gay young widow that made a great figure at the court end of the town : she distinguished herself by her splendid equipage, her rich liveries, her brilliant assemblies, her numerous routs, and her elegant taste in dress and furniture. She is nearly related to some of the best families in England, and it must be owned, mistress of many fine accomplishments. But being deficient in true delicacy, she endeavoured to hide that defect by affectation. She pretended to a thousand antipathies which did not belong to her nature. A breast of veal threw her into mortal ag-

nies,

nies. If she saw a spider she screamed; and at sight of a mouse she fainted away. She could not without horror behold an entire joint of meat; and nothing but fricassees and other made-dishes were seen upon her table. She caused all her floors to be lined with green bays, that she might trip along them with more ease and pleasure. Her footmen wore clogs, which were deposited in the hall, and both they and her chairmen were laid under the strongest injunctions to avoid porter and tobacco. Her jointure amounted to eight hundred pounds per annum, and she made shift to spend four times that sum: at length it was mortgaged for nearly the entire value; but, far from retrenching, she seemed to increase in extravagance until her effects were taken in execution, and her person here deposited in safe custody. When one considers the abrupt transition she underwent from her spacious apartments to an hovel scarce eight feet square; from sumptuous furniture to bare benches; from magnificence to meanness; from affluence to extreme poverty; one would imagine she must have been totally overwhelmed with such a sudden gust of misery. But this was not the case: she has, in fact, no delicate feelings. She forthwith accommodated herself to the exigency of her fortune; yet she still affects to keep state amidst the miseries of a jail; and this affectation is truly ridiculous.—She lies a-bed till two o'clock in the afternoon: she maintains a female attendant for the sole purpose of dressing her person. Her cabin is the least cleanly in the whole prison; she has learned to eat bread and cheese, and drink porter; but she always appears once a day in the pink of the fashion. She has found means to run in debt at the chandler's shop, the baker's, and the tap-house, though there is nothing got in this place but with ready money: she has even borrowed small sums from divers prisoners, who were themselves on the brink of starving. She takes pleasure in being surrounded with duns, observing, that by such people

ple a person of fashion is to be distinguished. She writes circular letters to her former friends and acquaintance, and by this method has raised pretty considerable contributions; for she writes in an elegant and irresistible stile. About a fortnight ago she received a supply of twenty guineas; when, instead of paying her little gaol-debts, or withdrawing any part of her apparel from pawn, she laid out the whole sum in a fashionable suit and laces; and next day borrowed of me a shilling to purchase a neck of mutton for her dinner.—She seems to think her rank in life entitles her to this kind of assistance. She talks very pompously of her family and connexions, by whom, however, she has been long renounced. She has no sympathy nor compassion for the distressed of her fellow-creatures; but she is perfectly well-bred; she bears a repulse the best of any woman I ever knew; and her temper has never been once ruffled since her arrival at the King's Bench.—She now intreated me to lend her half-a-guinea, for which she said she had the most pressing occasion, and promised upon her honour it should be repaid to-morrow; but I lent a deaf ear to her request, and told her in plain terms that her honour was already bankrupt.—”

Sir Launcelot thrusting his hand mechanically into his pocket, pulled out a couple of guineas, and desired Felton to accommodate her with that trifle in his own name; but he declined the proposal, and refused to touch the money. “God forbid (said he) that I should attempt to thwart your charitable intention; but this, my good Sir, is no object—she has many resources. Neither should we number the clamorous beggar among those who really feel distress. He is generally gorged with bounty misapplied. The liberal hand of charity should be extended to modest want that pines in silence, encountering cold and nakedness, and hunger, and every species of distress. Here you may find the wretch of keen sensations; blasted by accident in the blossom of his fortune,

Shi.

shivering in the solitary recess of indigence, disdaining to beg, and even ashamed to let his misery be known. Here you may see the parent who has known happier times, surrounded by his tender offspring, naked and forlorn, demanding food, which his circumstances cannot afford — That man of decent appearance and melancholy aspect, who lifted his hat as you passed him in the yard, is a person of unblemished character. He was a reputable tradesman in the city, and failed through inevitable losses. A commission of bankruptcy was taken out against him by his sole creditor, a quaker, who refused to sign his certificate. He has lived these three years in prison, with a wife and five small children. In a little time after his commitment, he had friends who offered to pay ten shillings in the pound of what he owed, and to give security for paying the remainder in three years, by installments. The honest quaker did not charge the bankrupt with any dishonest practices; but he rejected the proposal with the most mortifying indifference, declaring that he did not want his money. The mother repaired to his house, and kneeled before him with her five lovely children, imploring mercy with tears and exclamations. He stood this scene unmoved, and even seemed to enjoy the prospect, wearing the looks of complacency while his heart was steeled with rancour. "Woman, (said he) these be hopeful babes, if they were duly nurtured. Go thy ways in peace; I have taken my resolution." Her friends maintained the family for some time; but it is not in human charity to persevere: some of them died; some of them grew unfortunate; some of them fell off; and now the poor man is reduced to the extremity of indigence, from whence he has no prospect of being retrieved. The fourth part of what you would have bestowed upon the lady would make this poor man and his family sign with joy."

He

He had scarce pronounced these words when our hero desired the man might be called, and in a few minutes he entered the apartment with a low obeisance. "Mr. Coleby, (said the knight) I have heard how cruelly you have been used by your creditor, and beg you will accept this trifling present, if it can be of any service to you in your distress." So saying, he put five guineas into his hand. The poor man was so confounded at such an unlooked-for acquisition, that he stood motionless and silent, unable to thank the donor; and Mr. Felton conveyed him to the door, observing that his heart was too full for utterance. But, in a little time, his wife bursting into the room with her five children, looked around, and going up to Sir Launcelot, without any direction, exclaimed: "This is the angel sent by Providence to succour me and my poor innocents." Then falling at his feet, she pressed his hand and bathed it with tears—He raised her up with that complacency which was natural to his disposition. He kissed all her children, who were remarkably handsome and neatly kept, though in homely apparel; and giving her his direction, assured her she might always apply to him in her distress.

After her departure, he produced a bank-note for twenty pounds, and would have deposited it in the hands of Mr. Felton, to be distributed in charities among the objects of the place; but he desired it might be left with Mr. Norton, who was the proper person for managing his benevolence; and he promised to assist the deputy with his advice in laying it out.

C H A P. XXII.

In which Captain Crowe is sublimed into the regions of astrology.

THREE whole days had our adventurer prosecuted his inquiry about the amiable Aurelia, whom he sought in every place of public and of private entertainment, or resort, without obtaining the least satisfactory intelligence, when he received one evening, from the hands of a porter, who instantly vanished, the following billet: "If you would learn the particulars of Miss Darnel's fate, fail not to be in the fields by the Foundling Hospital, precisely at seven o'clock this evening, when you shall be met by a person who will give you the satisfaction you desire, together with his reason for addressing you in this mysterious manner——" Had this intimation concerned any other subject, perhaps the knight would have deliberated with himself in what manner he should take a hint so darkly communicated: but his eagerness to retrieve the jewel he had lost, divested him of all his caution; the time of assignation was already at hand, and neither the captain nor his nephew could be found to accompany him, had he been disposed to make use of their attendance. He therefore, after a moment's hesitation, repaired to the place appointed, in the utmost agitation and anxiety, lest the hour should be elapsed before his arrival.

Crowe was one of those defective spirits, who cannot subsist for any length of time on their own bottoms. He wanted a familiar prop, upon which he could disburthen his cares, his doubts, and his humours: an humble friend who would endure his caprices, and with whom he could communicate, free of all reserve and restraint. Though he loved his nephew's person, and admired his parts, he considered

sidered him often as a little petulant jackanapes, who presumed upon his superior understanding; and as Sir Launcelot, there was something in his character that overawed the seaman, and kept him at a disagreeable distance. He had, in this dilemma, cast his eyes upon Timothy Crabshaw, and admitted him to a considerable share of familiarity and fellowship. These companions had been employed in smoaking a social pipe at an alchouse in the neighbourhood, when the knight made his excursion; and returning to the house about supper-time, found Mr. Clarke in waiting. The young lawyer was alarmed when he heard the hour of ten, without seeing our adventurer, who had been used to be extremely regular in his economy; and the captain and he supped in profound silence. Finding, upon enquiry among the servants, that the knight went out abruptly, in consequence of having received a billet, Tom began to be visited with the apprehension of a duel, and sat the best part of the night by his uncle, sweating with the expectation of seeing our hero brought home a breathless corse: but no tidings of him arriving, he, about two in the morning, repaired to his own lodging, resolved to publish a description of Sir Launcelot in the news-papers, if he should not appear next day. Crowe did not pass the time without uneasiness. He was extremely concerned at the thought of some mischief having befallen his friend and patron; and he was terrified with the apprehension, that in case Sir Launcelot was murdered, his spirit might come and give him notice of his fate. Now he had an insuperable aversion to all correspondence with the dead; and taking it for granted, that the spirit of his departed friend could not appear to him except when he should be alone, and a-bed in the dark, he determined to pass the remainder of the night without going to bed. For this purpose his first care was to visit the garret, in which Timothy Crabshaw lay fast asleep, snoring with his mouth wide open. Him the captain

captain with difficulty roused, by dint of promising to regale him with a bowl of rum punch in the kitchen, where the fire, which had been extinguished, was soon rekindled. The ingredients were fetched from a public-house in the neighbourhood; for the captain was too proud to use his interest in the knight's family, especially at these hours when all the rest of the servants had retired to their repose; and he and Timothy drank together until day-break, the conversation turning upon hobgoblins, and God's revenge against murder. The cookmaid lay in a little apartment contiguous to the kitchen; and whether disturbed by these horrible tales of apparitions, or titillated by the savoury steams that issued from the punch-bowl, she made a virtue of necessity, or appetite, and dressing herself in the dark, suddenly appeared before them, to the no small perturbation of both. Timothy, in particular, was so startled in his endeavours to make an hasty retreat towards the chimney corner, he overturned the table; the liquor was spilt, but the bowl was saved, by falling on a heap of ashes. Mrs. Cook having reprimanded him for his foolish fear, declared she had got up betimes, in order to scour her saucepans; and the captain proposed to have the bowl replenished, if materials could be procured. This difficulty was overcome by Crabshaw; and they sat down with their new associate to discuss the second edition. The knight's sudden disappearing being brought upon the carpet, their female companion gave it as her opinion, that nothing would be so likely to bring this affair to light, as going to a cunning man, whom she had lately consulted about a silver spoon that was mislaid, and who told her all the things that she aver did, and ever would happen to her through the whole course of her life.

Her two companions pricked up their ears at this intelligence; and Crowe asked, if the spoon had been found? she answered in the affirmative, and said, the

the cunning man described to a hair the person that should be her true love, and her wedded husband : that he was a sea-faring man ; that he was pretty well stricken in years ; a little passionate or so ; and that he went with his fingers clinched like, as it were. The captain began to sweat at this description, and mechanically thrust his hands into his pockets, while Crabshaw, pointing to him, told her, he believed she had got the right sow by the ear. Crowe grumbled, that mayhap he should not be brought up by such a grappling neither. Then he asked, if this cunning man dealt with the devil ? declaring in that case he would keep clear of him : for why ? because he must have sold himself to old scratch : and being a servant of the devil, how could he be a good subject to his majesty ? Mrs. Cook assured him, the conjurer was a good Christian ; and that he gained all his knowledge by conversing with the stars and planets. Thus satisfied, the two friends resolved to consult him as soon as it should be light ; and being directed to the place of his habitation, set out for it by seven in the morning. They found the house forsaken, and had already reached the end of the lane in their return, when they were accosted by an old woman, who gave them to understand, that if they had occasion for the advice of a fortune-teller, as she did suppose they had, from their stopping at the house where Dr. Grubble lived, she would conduct them to a person of much more eminence in that profession ; at the same time she informed them, that the said Grubble had been lately sent to Bridewell ; a circumstance, which, with all his art he had not been able to foresee. The captain, without any scruple, put himself and his companion under convoy of this beldame, who, through many windings and turnings, brought them to the door of a ruinous house, standing in a blind alley ; which door having opened with a key drawn from her pocket, she introduced them into a parlour, where they saw no other

other furniture than a naked bench, and some frightful figures on the bare walls, drawn or rather scrawled with charcoal. Here she left them locked in, until she should give the doctor notice of their arrival, and they amused themselves with decyphering these characters and hieroglyphics. The first figure that engaged their attention, was that of a man hanging on a gibbet, which both considered as an unfavourable omen, and each endeavoured to avert from his own person. Crabshaw observed, that the figure so suspended was clothed in a sailor's jacket and trowsers; a truth which the captain could not deny; but on the other hand he affirmed, that the said figure exhibited the very nose and chin of Timothy, together with the hump on one shoulder. A warm dispute ensued; and being maintained with much acrimonious altercation, might have dissolved the new-cemented friendship of these two originals, had it not been interrupted by the old sybil, who, coming into the parlour, intimated, that the doctor waited for them above. She likewise told them that he never admitted more than one at a time. This hint occasioned a fresh contest: the captain insisted upon Crabshaw's making sail a-head, in order to look out afore; but Timothy persisted in refusing this honour, declaring he did not pretend to lead, but he would follow as in duty bound. The old gentlewoman abridged the ceremony, by leading out Crabshaw with one hand, and locking up Crowe with the other. The former was dragged up stairs like a bear to the stake, not without reluctance and terror, which did not at all abate at the sight of the conjurer, with whom he was immediately shut up by his conductress; after she had told him in a whisper, that he must deposit a shilling in a little black coffin, supported by a human skull and thigh bones crossed, on a stool covered with black bays, that stood in one corner of the apartment. The squire having made this offering with fear and trembling, ventured to

survey

survey
well ca
divers
of a yo
veral fr
jaws of
funeral
lay a b
and ma
inkstan
peared
head so
templa
nothin
knew,
as well

This
out ma
made
and h
him, i
clare
to the
more
Crowe
ing a f
rific a
upon
crow,
squire
upon
conju
down
— I
cheat
faying
that c
nour'
of the
Vo

survey the objects around him, which were very well calculated to augment his confusion. He saw divers skeletons hung by the head; the stuffed skin of a young alligator, a calf with two heads, and several snakes suspended from the ceiling, with the jaws of a shark, and a starved weasel. On another funeral-table he beheld two spheres, between which lay a book open, exhibiting outlandish characters, and mathematical diagrams. On one side stood an inkstandish with paper, and behind this desk appeared the conjurer himself in sable vestments, his head so overshadowed with hair, that far from contemplating his features, Timothy could distinguish nothing but a long white beard, which for ought he knew, might have belonged to a four legged goat, as well as to a two legged astrologer.

This apparition, which the squire did not eye without manifest discomposure, extending a white wand, made certain evolutions over the head of Timothy, and having muttered an ejaculation, commanded him, in a hollow tone, to come forward and declare his name. Crabshaw thus adjured advanced to the altar; and whether from design, or (which is more probable from confusion, answered "Samuel Crowe." The conjurer taking up the pen, and making a few scratches on the paper, exclaimed in a terrific accent, How! miscreant! attempt to impose upon the stars?—you look more like a *crab* than a *crow*, and was born under the sign of Cancer." The squire, almost annihilated by this exclamation, fell upon his knees, crying, "I pray yaw, my lord conjurer's worship, pardon my ignorance, and down't go to baind me oover to the Red Sea like—I'se a poor Yorkshire tyke, and would no more cheat the stars than I'd cheat my own vather as the saying is—a must be a good hand at *trapping*, that catches the stars a *napping*—but as your honour's worship observed, my name is Tim Crabshaw, of the East Raiding, groom and squair to Sir Laun-

celot Greaves, baron knaight, and arrant knaight, who ran mad for a wench, as your worship's conjuration well knoweth : — the person below is Captain Crowe ; and we coom by Maigery Cook's récommendation to seek after my master, who is gone away or made away, the Lord he knows how and where."

Here he was interrupted by the conjurer, who exhorted him to sit down and compose himself until he should cast a figure : then he scrawled the paper, and waving his wand, repeated abundance of gibberish concerning the number, the names, the houses, and revolutions of the planets, with their conjunctions, oppositions, signs, circles, cycles, trines and trigons. When he perceived that this artifice had its proper effect in disturbing the brain of Crabshaw, he proceeded to tell him from the stars, that his name was Crabshaw, or Crabsclaw ; that he was born in the East Riding of Yorkshire, of poor, yet honest parents, and had some skill in horses ; that he served a gentleman, whose name began with the letter G——, which gentleman had run mad for love, and left his family ; but whether he would return alive or dead the stars had not yet determined. Poor Timothy was thunderstruck to find the conjurer acquainted with all these circumstances, and begged to know if he mought be so bauld as to ax a question or two about his own fortune. The astrologer pointing to the little coffin, our squire understood the hint, and deposited another shilling. The sage had recourse to his book, erected another scheme, performed once more his airy evolutions with the wand, and having recited another mystical preamble, expounded the book of Fate in these words : " You shall neither die by war nor by water, by hunger or by thirst, nor be brought to the grave by old age or distemper ; but, let me see——ay the stars will have it so,——you shall be——exalted——hah !——ay, that is——hanged for horse-scaling."

stealing."—— "O good my lord conjurer! (roared the squire) I'd as lief give forty shillings as be hanged."—— "Peace, sirrah! (cried the other) would you contradict or reverse the immutable decrees of fate. Hanging is your destiny; and hanged you shall be——and comfort yourself with this reflection, that as you are not the first, so neither will you be the last to swing on Tyburn-tree." This comfortable assurance composed the mind of Timothy, and in a great measure reconciled him to the prediction. He now proceeded in a whining tone to ask whether he should suffer for the first fact? whether it would be for a horse or a mare? and of what colour? that he might know when his hour was come." The conjurer gravely answered, that he would steal a dappled gelding on a Wednesday; be cast at the Old Bailey on Thursday, and suffer on a Friday; and he strenuously recommended it to him, to appear in the cart with a nosegay in one hand, and the Whole Duty of Man in the other. "But if in case it should be in the winter (said the squire) when a nosegay can't be had"——Why then (replied the conjurer) an orange will do as well. These material points being adjusted to the entire satisfaction of Timothy, he declared he would bestow another shilling to know the fortune of an old companion, who truly did not deserve so much at his hands; but he could not help loving him better than e'er a friend he had in the world. So saying he dropped a third offering into the coffin, and desired to know the fate of his horse Gilbert. The astrologer, having again consulted his art, pronounced, that Gilbert would die of the raggers, and his carcase be given to the hounds; a sentence which made a much deeper impression upon Crabshaw's mind, than did the prediction of his own untimely and disgraceful fate. He shed a plentiful shower of tears, and his grief broke forth in some passionate expressions of tenderness:——at length he told the astrologer he would go and send

up the captain, who wanted to consult him about Margery Cook, because as how she had informed him that Dr. Grubbe had described just such another man as the captain for her true love ; and he had no great stomach to the match, if so be as the stars were not bent upon their coming together. Accordingly the squire being dismissed by the conjurer, descended to the parlour with a rueful length of face ; which being perceived by the captain, he demanded "What cheer, ho ?" with some signs of apprehension. Crabshaw making no return to this salute, he asked if the conjurer had taken an observation, and told him any thing ? Then the other replied, he had told him more than he desired to know. "Why, an that be the case, (said the seaman) I have no occasion to go aloft this trip, brother." This evasion would not serve his turn : old Tisiphone was at hand, and led him up growling into the hall of audience, which he did not examine without trepidation. Having been directed to the coffin, where he presented half a crown, in hope of rendering the fates more propitious, the usual ceremony was performed ; and the doctor addressed him in these words : "Approach, Raven," The captain advancing, "You an't much mistaken, brother, (said he) heave your eye into the binnacle, and box your compass, you'll find I'm a Crowe, not a Raven, tho' indeed they be both fowls of a feather, as the saying is."—"I know it (cried the conjurer) thou art a northern crow,—a sea crow ; not a crow of prey ; but a crow to be preyed upon :—a crow to be plucked,—to be slayed,—to be basted,—to be broiled by Margery upon the gridiron of matrimony—" The novice changing colour at this denunciation, "I do understand your signals, brother, (said he) and if it be set down in the log-book of fate, that we must grapple, why then, ware timbers. But as I know how the land lies, d'ye see, and the current of my inclination sets me off, I shall haul up close to the wind, and mayhap we shall clear cape Margery. But, howsoever, we shall
clear

leave that reef in the foretopfail:—I was bound upon another voyage, d'ye see—to look and to see, and to know, if so be as how I could pick up any intelligence along shore, concerning my friend Sir Launcelot, who slipped his cable last night, and has lost company, d'ye see.” “What! (exclaimed the cunning man) art thou a crow, and can'st not smell carrion? If thou would'st grieve for Greaves, behold his naked carcase lies unburied to feed the kites, the crows, the gulls, the rooks and ravens.” —“What broach'd too?” “Dead as a boiled lobster.” “Odd's heart! friend, these are the heaviest tidings I have heard these seven long years—there must have been deadly odds when he lowered his topails—Smite my eyes! I had rather the Musti had foundered at sea, with myself and all my generation on board—well fare thy soul, flower of the world! had honest Sam Crowe been within hail—but what signifies palavering.” Here the tears of unaffected sorrow flowed plentifully down the furrows of the seaman's cheeks: then his grief giving way to his indignation, “Heark ye, brother conjurer, (said he) you that can spy foul wearther before it comes, damn your eyes! why did not you give us warning of this here squall? Blast my limbs! I'll make you give an account of this here damned, horrid, confounded murder, d'ye see:—mayhap you yourself was concerned, d'ye see:—for my own part, brother, I put my trust in God, and steer by the compass; and I value not your paw-wawing, and your conjuration, of a rope's end, d'ye see.”——The conjurer was by no means pleased, either with the matter, or the manner of this address: he therefore began to sooth the captain's choler, by representing that he did not pretend to omniscience, which was the attribute of God alone; that human art was fallible and imperfect; and all that it could perform, was to discover certain partial circumstances of any particular object to which its enquiries were directed:

that being questioned by the other man, concerning the cause of his master's disappearing, he had exercised his skill upon the subject, and found reason to believe that Sir Launcelot was assassinated; that he should think himself happy in being the instrument of bringing the murderers to justice, though he foresaw they would of themselves save him that trouble; for they would quarrel about dividing the spoil, and one would give information against the other.

The prospect of this satisfaction appeased the resentment, and, in some measure, mitigated the grief of captain Crowe, who took his leave without much ceremony; and being joined by Crabshaw, proceeded with a heavy heart to the house of Sir Launcelot Greaves, where they found the domestics at breakfast, without exhibiting the least symptom of concern for their absent master. Crowe had been wise enough to conceal from Crabshaw what he had learned of the knight's fate. This fatal intelligence he reserved for the ear of his nephew, Mr. Clarke, who did not fail to attend him in the forenoon.

As for the squire, he did nothing but ruminate in rueful silence upon the dappled gelding, the nosegay, and the predicted fate of Gilbert. Him he forthwith visited in the stable, and saluted with the kiss of peace. Then he bemoaned his fortune with tears, and by the sound of his own lamentation, was lulled asleep among the litter.

C H A P. XXIII.

In which the clouds that cover the catastrophe begin to disperse.

WE must now leave Captain Crowe and his nephew Mr. Clarke, arguing with great vehemence about the fatal intelligence obtained from
the

the conjuror, and penetrate at once the veil that concealed our hero. Know then, reader, that Sir Launcelot Greaves, repairing to the place described in the billet which he had received, was accosted by a person muffled in a cloak, who began to amuse him with a feigned story of Aurelia : to which, while he listened with great attention, he found himself suddenly surrounded by armed men, who seized and pinioned down his arms, took away his sword, and conveyed him by force into a hackney-coach provided for the purpose. In vain he expostulated on this violence with three persons who accompanied him in the vehicle. He could not extort one word by way of reply ; and, from their gloomy aspects, he began to be apprehensive of assassination. Had the carriage passed through any frequented place, he would have endeavoured to alarm the inhabitants ; but it was already clear of the town, and his conductors took care to avoid all villages and inhabited houses.

After having travelled about two miles, the coach stopped at a large iron-gate, which being opened, our adventurer was led in silence through a spacious house into a tolerably decent apartment, which he understood was intended for his bed-chamber. In a few minutes after his arrival, he was visited by a man of no very prepossessing appearance, who endeavoured to smoothe his countenance, which was naturally stern, welcomed our adventurer to his house ; exhorted him to be of good cheer, assuring him he should want for nothing ; and desired to know what he would choose for supper.

Sir Launcelot, in answer to this civil address, begged he would explain the nature of his confinement, and the reasons for which his arms were tied like those of the worst malefactor. The other postponed till to-morrow the explanation he demanded ; but, in the mean time, unbound his setters, and as he declined eating, left him alone to his repose. He took care,

however, in retiring, to double-lock the door of the room, whose windows were grated on the outside with iron.

The knight, being thus abandoned to his own meditations, began to ruminate on the present adventure with equal surprize and concern; but the more he revolved circumstances, the more was he perplexed in his conjectures. According to the state of the mind, a very subtle philosopher is often puzzled by a very plain proposition; and this was the case of our adventurer. — What made the strongest impression upon his mind, was a notion that he was apprehended on suspicion of treasonable practices, by a warrant from the secretary of state, in consequence of some false malicious information; and that his prison was no other than the house of a messenger, set apart for the accommodation of suspected persons. In this opinion he comforted himself by recollecting his own conscious innocence, and reflecting that he should be entitled to the privilege of habeas corpus, as the act including that inestimable jewel was happily not suspended at this time.

Consoled by this self-assurance, he quietly resigned himself to slumber; but, before he fell asleep, he was very disagreeably undeceived in his conjecture. His ears were all at once saluted with a noise from the next room, conveyed in distinct bounces against the wainscot; then an hoarse voice exclaimed, “Bring up the artillery — let Brutandorf’s brigade advance — detach my black hussars to ravage the country — let them be new booted — take particular care of the spur leathers — make a desert of Lusatia — bombard the suburbs of Pera — go, tell my brother Henry to pass the Elbe at Meissen with forty battalions and fifty squadrons — so ho, you major-general Donder, who don’t you finish your second parallel? — send hither the engineer Schittenbach — I’ll lay all the shoes in my shop, the breach will be practicable in

in-four and twenty hours — don't tell me of your works—you and your works may be damned.”—

“ Assuredly. (cried another voice from a different quarter) he that thinks to be saved by works, is in a state of utter reprobation—I myself was a prophane weaver, and trusted to the rottenness of works—I kept my journeymen and 'prentices at constant work; and my heart was set upon the riches of this world, which was a wicked work—but now I have got a glimpse of the new light—I feel the operations of grace—I am of the new birth—I abhor good works—I detest all working but the working of the spirit—Avaunt, Satan — O! how I thirst for communication with our sister Jolly”——

“ The communication is already open with the Marche, (said the first) but as for thee, thou caitif, who hast presumed to disparage my works, I'll have thee rammed into a mortar with a double charge of powder, and thrown into the enemy's quarters.”

This dialogue operated like a train upon many other inhabitants of the place: one swore he was within three vibrations of finding the longitude, when this noise confounded his calculation: a second in broken English, complained he was distorted in the moment of de profection——a third, in the character of his holiness, denounced interdiction, excommunication, and anathemas; and swore by St. Peter's keys, they should howl ten thousand years in purgatory, without the benefit of a single mass. A fourth began to hollow in all the vociferation of a fox-hunter in the chace; and in an instant the whole house was in an uproar——The clamour, however, was of a short duration. The different chambers being opened successively, every individual was effectually silenced by the sound of one cabalistical word, which was no other than *waistcoat*; a charm which at once cowed the king of P——, dispossessed the fanatic, dumb founded the mathematician, dis-

mayer the alchymist, deposed the pope, and deprived the squire of all utterance.

Our adventurer was no longer in doubt concerning the place to which he had been conveyed; and the more he reflected on his situation, the more he was overwhelmed with the most perplexing chagrin. He could not conceive by whose means he had been immured in a mad-house; but he heartily repented of his knight errantry, as a frolic which might have very serious consequences, with respect to his future life and fortune. After mature deliberation, he resolved to demean himself with the utmost circumspection, well knowing that every violent transport would be interpreted into an undeniable symptom of insanity. He was not without hope of being able to move his jailor by a due administration of that which is generally more efficacious than all the flowers of elocution; but when he rose in the morning, he found his pockets had been carefully examined, and emptied of all his papers and cash.

The keeper entering, he enquired about these particulars, and was given to understand that they were all safely deposited for his use, to be forthcoming at a proper season: but at present, as he should want for nothing, he had no occasion for money. The knight acquiesced in this declaration, and eat his breakfast in quiet. About eleven, he received a visit from the physician, who contemplated his looks with great solemnity; and having examined his pulse, shook his head, saying, "Well, Sir, how d'ye do?—come, don't be dejected—every thing is for the best—you are in very good hands, Sir, I assure you: and I dare say will refuse nothing that may be thought conducive to the recovery of your health."

"Doctor, (said our hero) if it is not an improper question to ask, I should be glad to know your opinion of my disorder?"—"O! sir, as to that—replied the physician) your disorder is a—kind of a—Sir, 'tis very common in this country—a sort of a"—

"Do

"Do you think my distemper is madness, doctor?"
 — "O Lord! Sir,—not absolute madness—no—not madness—you have heard, no doubt, of what is called a weakness of the nerves, Sir—though that is a very inaccurate expression: for this phrase, denoting a morbid excess of sensation, seems to imply that sensation itself is owing to the loose cohesion of those material particles which constitute the nervous substance, inasmuch as the quantity of every effect must be proportionable to it's cause; now you'll please to take notice, Sir, if the case were really what these words seem to import, all bodies, whose particles do not cohere with too great a degree of proximity, would be nervous: that is, endued with sensation. —Sir I shall order some cooling things to keep you in due temperature; and you'll do very well —Sir your humble servant.

So saying, he returned, and our adventurer could not but think it was very hard that one man should not dare to ask the most ordinary question without being reputed mad, while another should talk nonsense by the hour, and yet be esteemed as an oracle—The master of the house finding Sir Launcelot so tame and tractable, indulged him after dinner with a walk in a little private garden, under the eye of a servant, who followed him at a distance. Here he was saluted by a brother prisoner, a man seemingly turned of thirty, tall and thin, with staring eyes, a hook nose, and a face covered with pimples.

The usual compliments having passed, the stranger, without further ceremony, asked if he would oblige him with a chew of tobacco, or could spare him a mouthful of any sort of cordial, declaring he had not tasted brandy since he came to the house—The knight assured him it was not in his power to comply with his request; and began to ask some questions relating to the character of their landlord, which the stranger represented in very unfavourable colours. He described him as a ruffian, capable of undertaking the

darkest schemes of villainy. He said his house was a repository of the most flagrant iniquities: that it contained fathers kidnapped by their children, wives confined by their husbands, gentlemen of fortune sequestered by their relations, and innocent persons immured by the malice of their adversaries. He affirmed this was his own case; and asked if our hero had never heard of Dick Distich, the poet and satyrist. "Ben Bullock and I (said he) were confident against the world in arms — did you never see his ode to me beginning with "Fair blooming youth," We were sworn brothers, admired and praised, and quoted each other, Sir: we denounced war against all the world, actors, authors, and critics: and having drawn the sword, threw away the scabbard—we pushed through thick and thin, hacked and hewed helter skelter, and became as formidable to the writers of the age, as the Bæotian band of Thebes. My friend Bullock, indeed, was once rolled in the kennel; but soon

He vig'rous rose, and from th' effluvia strong
Imbib'd new life, and scour'd and stunk along.

Here is a satire, which I wrote in an alehouse when I was drunk—I can prove it by the evidence of the landlord and his wife: I fancy you'll own I have some right to say with my friend Horace,

*Qui me commorit, melius non tangere blamo,
Flebit et insignis tote cantabitur urbe —*

The knight, having perused the papers, declared his opinion that the verses were tolerably good; but at the same time observed that the author had reviled as ignorant dunces several persons who had writ with reputation, and were generally allowed to have genius: a circumstance that would detract more from his candour, than could be allowed to his capacity.

"Damn ther genius! (cried the satyrist) a pack of impertinent rascals! I tell you, Sir, Ben Bullock and I had determined to crush all that were not of

our

our own party—besides, I said before, this piece was written in drink.” “Was you drunk too when it was written and published?” “Yes the printer shall make affidavit, that I was never otherwise than drunk or maudlin, till my enemies, on pretence that my brain was turned, conveyed me to this infernal mansion—”

“They seem to have been your best friends, (said the knight) and have put the most tender interpretation on your conduct; for, waving the plea of insanity, your character must stand as that of a man who hath some small share of genius, without an atom of integrity.—Of all those whom Pope lashed in his *Dunciad*, there was not one who did not richly deserve the imputation of dulness; and every one of them had provoked the satyrists by a personal attack. In this respect the English poet was much more honest than his French pattern Boileau, who stigmatized several men of acknowledged genius; such as Quinault, Perrault, and the celebrated Lulli; for which reason every man of a liberal turn must, in spite of all his poetical merit, despise him as a rancorous knave. If this disingenuous conduct cannot be forgiven in a writer of his superior genius, who will pardon it in you whose name is not half emerged from obscurity?”

“Heark ye, friend, (replied the bard) keep your pardon and your counsel for those who ask it: or, if you will force them upon people, take one piece of advice in return: If you don’t like your present situation, apply for a committee without delay: they’ll find you too much of a fool to have the least tincture of madness; and you’ll be released without further scruple: in that case I shall rejoice in your deliverance; you will be freed from confinement, and I shall be happily deprived of your conversation.”

So saying, he flew off at a tangent, and our knight could not help smiling at the peculiar virulence of his

his disposition. Sir Launcelot then endeavoured to enter into conversation with his attendant, by asking how long Mr. Distich had resided in the house, but he might as well have addressed himself to a Turkish mute: the fellow either pretended ignorance, or refused an answer to every question that was proposed. He would not even disclose the name of his landlord, nor inform him where the house was situated.

Finding himself agitated with impatience and indignation, he returned to his apartment, and the door being locked upon him, began to review, not without horror, the particulars of his fate. "How little reason (said he to himself) have we to boast of the blessings enjoyed by the British subject if he holds them on such a precarious tenure; if a man of rank and property may be thus kidnapped even in the midst of the capital; if he may be seized by ruffians, insulted, robbed, and conveyed to such a prison as this, from which there seems to be no possibility of escape; Shou'd I be indulged with pen, ink, and paper, and appeal to my relations, or to the magistrates of my country, my letters would be intercepted by those who super-intend my confinement. Should I try to alarm the neighbourhood, my cries would be neglected as those of some unhappy lunatic under necessary correction. Should I employ the force which heaven has lent me, I might imbrue my hands in innocent blood, and after all find it impossible to escape through a number of successive doors, locks, bolts, and centinels. Should I endeavour to tamper with the servant, he might discover my design, and then I shall be abridged of the little comfort I enjoy. People may inveigh against the Bastile in France, and the Inquisition in Portugal; but I would ask, if either of these be in reality so dangerous or dreadful as a private mad-house in England, under the direction of a ruffian. The Bastile is a state prison; the Inquisition is a spiritual tribunal: but both are under the direction of government. It sel-

dom,

dom, if ever, happens that a man entirely innocent is confined in either; or, if he should, he lays his account with a legal trial before established judges. But in England, the most innocent person upon earth is liable to be immured for life under the pretext of lunacy, sequestered from his wife, children, and friends, robbed of his fortune, deprived even of necessities, and subjected to the most brutal treatment from a low bred barbarian, who raises an ample fortune on the misery of his fellow-creatures, and may, during his whole life, practise this horrid oppression without question or controul."

This uncomfortable reverie was interrupted by a very unexpected sound that seemed to issue from the other side of a thick party-wall. It was a strain of vocal music, more plaintive than the widow'd turtles moan, more sweet and ravishing than Philomel's love-warbled song. Through his ear it instantly pierced into his heart; for at once he recognized it to be the voice of his adored Aurelia. Heavens! what was the agitation of his soul, when he made this discovery! how did every nerve quiver! How did his heart throb with the most violent emotion! He ran round the room in distraction, foaming like a lion in the toil—then he placed his ear close to the partition, and listened as if his whole soul was exerted in his sense of hearing. When the sound ceased to vibrate on his ear, he threw himself on the bed: he groaned with anguish, he exclaimed in broken accents; and in all probability his heart would have burst, had not the violence of his sorrow found vent in a flood of tears.

These first transports were succeeded by a fit of impatience, which had well nigh deprived him of his senses in good earnest. His surprize at finding his lost Aurelia in such a place, the seeming impossibility of relieving her, and his unspeakable eagerness to contrive some scheme for profiting by the interesting discovery he had made, concurred in brewing

ing up a second extasy, during which he acted a thousand extravagancies, which it was well for him the attendants did not observe. Perhaps it was well for the servant that he did not enter while the paroxysm prevailed: had this been the case, he might have met with the fate of Lychas, whom Hercules in his frenzy destroyed.

Before the cloth was laid for supper, he was calm enough to conceal the disorder of his mind: but he complained of the head-ache, and desired he might be next day visited by the physician, to whom he resolved to explain himself in such a manner, as should make an impression upon him, provided he was not altogether destitute of conscience and humanity.

C H A P. XXIV.

The knot that puzzles human wisdom, the hand of fortune sometimes will untie, familiar as her garter.

WHEN the doctor made his next appearance in Sir Launcelot's apartment, the knight addressed him in these words: "Sir, the practice of medicine is one of the most honourable professions exercised among the sons of men; a profession which hath been revered at all periods and in all nations, and even held sacred in the most polished ages of antiquity. The scope of it is to preserve the being, and confirm the health of our fellow-creatures; of consequence, to sustain the blessings of society, and crown life with fruition. The character of a physician, therefore, not only supposes natural sagacity, and acquired erudition, but it also implies every delicacy of sentiment, every tenderness of nature, and every virtue of humanity. That these qualities are centered in you, doctor, I would willingly believe: but it will be sufficient for my purpose, that you are possessed of common integrity. To whose concern I

am

am indebted for your visits, you best know : but if you understand the art of medicine, you must be sensible by this time, that with respect to me your prescriptions are altogether unnecessary——come, Sir, you cannot——you don't believe that my intellects are disordered. Yet, granting me to be really under the influence of that deplorable malady, no person has a right to treat me as a lunatic, or to sue out a commission, but my nearest kindred.——That you may not plead ignorance of my name and family, you shall understand that I am Sir Launcelot Greaves, of the county of York, baronet; and that my nearest relation is Sir Reginald Meadows, of Cheshire, the eldest son of my mother's sister——that gentleman, I am sure, had no concern in seducing me by false pretences under the clouds of night into the fields, where I was surprised, overpowered, and kidnaped by armed ruffians. Had he really believed me insane, he would have proceeded according to the dictates of honour, humanity, and the laws of his country. Situated as I am, I have a right, by making application to the lord chancellor, to be tried by a jury of honest men,—But of that right I cannot avail myself, while I remain at the mercy of a brutal miscreant, in whose house I am inclosed, unless you contribute your assistance. Your assistance, therefore, I demand, as you are a gentleman, a christian, and a fellow-subject, who, though every other motive should be overlooked, ought to interest himself in my case as a common concern, and concur with all your power towards the punishment of those who dare commit such outrages against the liberty of your country."

The doctor seemed to be a little disconcerted; but after some recollection, resumed his air of sufficiency and importance, and assured our adventurer he would do him all the service in his power; but, in the mean time, advised him to take the potion he had prescribed.

The

The knight's eyes lightening with indignation, "I am now convinced, (cried he) that you are an accomplice in the villainy which has been practised upon me; that you are a fordid wretch, without principle or feeling, a disgrace to the faculty, and a reproach to human nature——yes, sirrah, you are the most perfidious of all assassins—you are the hireling minister of the worst of all villains; who from motives even baser than malice, envy, and revenge, rob the innocent of all the comforts of life, brand them with the imputation of madness, the most cruel species of slander, and wantonly protract their misery, by leaving them in the most shocking confinement, a prey to reflections infinitely more bitter than death——but I will be calm——do me justice at your peril. I demand the protection of the legislature——if I am refused,——remember, a day of reckoning will come——you and the rest of the miscreants who have combined against me, must, in order to cloak your treachery, have recourse to murder; an expedient which I believe you very capable of embracing, or a man of my rank and character cannot be much longer concealed——Tremble, caithif, at the thoughts of my release——in the mean time, be gone, lest my just resentment impel me to dash out your brains upon that marble——away——"

The honest doctor was not so firmly persuaded of his patient's lunacy as to reject his advice, which he made what haste he could to follow, when an unexpected accident intervened. That this may be properly introduced, we must return to the knight's brace of trusty friends, Captain Crowe and Lawyer Clarke, whom we left in sorrowful deliberation upon the fate of their patron. Clarke's genius being rather more fruitful in resources than that of the seaman, he suggested an advertisement, which was accordingly inserted in the daily papers; importing that, "Whereas a gentleman of considerable rank and fortune

tune

time had suddenly disappeared on such a night from his house near Golden-square, in consequence of a letter delivered to him by a porter; and there is great reason to believe some violence hath been offered to his life: any person capable of giving such information as may tend to clear up this dark transaction, shall, by applying to Mr. Thomas Clarke, attorney, at his lodgings in Upper Brook-street, receive proper security for the reward of one hundred guineas, to be paid to him upon his making the discovery required."

The porter who delivered the letter appeared accordingly, but could give no other information, except that it was put into his hand with a shilling, by a man muffled up in a great coat, who stopped him for the purpose, in his passing through Queen-street. It was necessary that the advertisement should produce an effect upon another person, who was no other than the hackney coachman, who drove our hero to the place of his imprisonment. This fellow had been enjoined secrecy, and indeed bribed to hold his tongue, by a considerable gratification, which, it was supposed, would have been effectual, as the man was a master coach-man in good circumstances, and well known to the keeper of the mad-house, by whom he had been employed on former occasions of the same nature. Perhaps his fidelity to his employer, reinforced by the hope of many future jobs of that kind, might have been proof against the offer of fifty pounds; but double that sum was a temptation he could not resist. He no sooner read the intimation in the Daily Advertiser, over his morning's pot at an ale-house, than he entered into consultation with his own thoughts; and having no reason to doubt that this was the very fare he had conveyed, he resolved to earn the reward, and abstain from all such adventures in time coming. He had the precaution, however, to take an attorney along with him to Mr. Clarke, who entered into a conditional

tional bond; and, with the assistance of his uncle, deposited the money, to be forthcoming when the conditions should be fulfilled. These previous measures being taken, the coachman declared what he knew, and discovered the house in which Sir Launcelot had been immured. He moreover accompanied our two adherents to a judge's chamber, where he made oath to the truth of his information; and a warrant was immediately granted to search the house of Bernard Shackle, and set at liberty Sir Launcelot Greaves, if there found.

Fortified with this authority, they engaged a constable with a formidable posse, and embarking them in coaches, repaired, with all possible expedition, to the house of Mr Shackle, who did not think proper to dispute their claim, but admitted them, though not without betraying evident symptoms of consternation. One of the servants directing them, by his master's order, to Sir Launcelot's apartment, they hurried up stairs in a body, occasioning such a noise, as did not fail to alarm the physician, who had just opened the door to retire, when he perceived their irruption. Captain Crowe, conjecturing he was guilty from the confusion that appeared in his countenance, made no scruple of seizing him by the collar, as he endeavoured to retreat; while the tender heart-ed Tom Clarke, running up to the knight with his eyes brimful of joy and affection, forgot all the forms of distant respect, and throwing his arms around his neck, blubbered in his bosom.

Our hero did not receive this proof of his attachment unmoved. He strained him in his embrace, honoured him with the title of his deliverer, and asked him by what miracle he had discovered the place of his confinement. The lawyer began to unfold the various steps he had taken, with equal minuteness and self-complacency, when Crowe dragging the doctor still by the collar, shook his old friend by the hand, protesting he was never so overjoyed

since

since he got clear of a Saltee Rover on the coast of Barbary; and that two glassess ago he would have started all the money he had in the world in the hold of any man who would have shewn Sir Launcelot safe at his moorings. The knight, having made a proper return to this sincere manifestation of good will, desired him to dismiss that worthless fellow, meaning the doctor, who, finding himself released, withdrew with some precipitation.

Then our adventurer, attended by his friends, walked with a deliberate pace to the outward gate, which he found open, and getting into one of the coaches, was entertained by the way to his own house with a detail of every measure which had been pursued for his release. In his own parlour he found Mrs. Dolly Cowslip, who had been waiting with great fear and impatience for the issue of Mr. Clarke's adventure. She now fell upon her knees, and bathed the knight's hands with tears of joy; while the face of this young woman, recalling the idea of her mistress, roused his heart to strong emotions, and stimulated his mind to the immediate achievement he had already planned. As for Crabshaw, he was not the last to signify his satisfaction at his master's return. After having kissed the hem of his garment, he retired to the stable, where he communicated these tidings to his friend Gilbert, whom he saddled and bridled: the same office he performed for Bronzomarte; then putting on his squire-like attire and accoutrements, he mounted one, and led the other to the knight's door, before which he paraded, uttering from time to time repeated shouts, to the no small entertainment of the populace, until he received orders to house his companions. Thus commanded, he led them back to their stalls, resumed his livery, and rejoined his fellow-servants, who were resolved to celebrate the day with banquets and rejoicings.

Their master's heart was not sufficiently at ease to share in their festivity. He held a consultation with his

his friends in the parlour, whom he acquainted with the reasons he had to believe Miss Darnel was confined in the same house which had been his prison: a circumstance which filled them with equal pleasure and astonishment. Dolly, in particular, weeping plentifully, conjured him to deliver her dear lady without delay. Nothing now remained but to concert the plan for her deliverance. As Aurelia had informed Dolly of her connection with Mrs. Kawdle, at whose house she proposed to lodge, before she was overtaken on the road by her uncle, this particular was now imparted to the council, and struck a light which seemed to point out the direct way to Miss Darnel's enlargement.

Our hero, accompanied by Mrs. Cowslip and Tom Clarke, set out immediately for the house of Dr. Kawdle, who happened to be abroad; but his wife received them with great courtesy. She was a well-bred, sensible, genteel woman, and strongly attached to Aurelia by the ties of affection as well as of consanguinity. She no sooner learned the situation of her cousin than she expressed the most impatient concern for her being set at liberty; and assured Sir Launcelot she would concur in any scheme he should propose for that purpose. There was no room for hesitation or choice; he attended her immediately to the judge, who, upon proper application, issued another search-warrant for Aurelia Darnel. The constable and his posse were again retained; and Sir Launcelot Greaves once more crossed the threshold of Mr. Bernard Shackle. Nor was the search-warrant the only implement of justice with which he had furnished himself for this visit. In going thither they agreed upon the method in which they should introduce themselves gradually to Miss Darnel, that her tender nature might not be too much shocked by their sudden appearance.

When they arrived at the house therefore, and produced their credentials, in consequence of which a female attendant was directed to shew the lady's apartment,

apartment, Mrs. Dolly first entered the chamber of the accomplished Aurelia, who, lifting up her eyes, screamed aloud, and flew into the arms of her faithful Cowslip. Some minutes elapsed before Dolly could make shift to exclaim,—“Am coom to live and daai with my beloved leady!” “Dear Dolly! (cried her mistress) I cannot express the pleasure I have in seeing you again—Good Heaven! what solitary hours of keen affliction have I passed since we parted! but, tell me, how did you discover the place of my retreat?—Has my uncle relented?—Do I owe your coming to his indulgence?”

Dolly answered in the negative; and by degrees gave her to understand that her cousin, Mrs. Kawdle, was in the next room; that lady immediately appeared, and a very tender scene of recognition passed between the two relations. It was she who, in the course of conversation, perceiving that Aurelia was perfectly composed, declared the happy tidings of the approaching deliverance. When the other eagerly insisted upon knowing to whose humanity and address she was indebted for this happy turn of fortune, her cousin declared the obligation was due to a young gentleman of Yorkshire, called Sir Launcelot Greaves. At mention of that name, her face was overspread with a crimson glow, and her eyes beamed redoubled splendor.—“Cousin, (said she, with a sigh) I know not what to say—that gentleman,—Sir Launcelot Greaves was surely born—Lord bless me!—I tell you, cousin, he has been my guardian angel.—”

Mrs. Kawdle, who had maintained a correspondence with her by letters, was no stranger to the former part of the connexion subsisting between those two lovers, and had always favoured the pretensions of our hero, without being acquainted with his person. She now observed with a smile, that as Aurelia esteemed the knight her guardian angel, and he adored her as a demi-deity, nature seemed to have intended them

them for each other; for such sublime ideas exalted them both above the sphere of ordinary mortals. She then ventured to intimate that he was in the house, impatient to pay his respects in person. At this declaration, the colour vanished from her cheeks; which, however, soon underwent a total suffusion. Her heart panted; her bosom heaved; and her gentle frame was agitated by transports rather violent than unpleasing. She soon, however, recollected herself, and her native serenity returned; when, rising from her seat, she declared she would see him in the next apartment, where he stood in the most tumultuous suspense, waiting for permission to approach her person. Here she broke in upon him, arrayed in an elegant white undress, the emblem of her purity, beaming forth the emanations of amazing beauty, warmed and improved with a glow of gratitude and affection. His heart was too big for utterance: he ran towards her with rapture, and, throwing himself at her feet, imprinted a respectful kiss upon her lilly hand. "This, divine Aurelia, (cried he) is a foretaste of that ineffable bliss, which you was born to bestow!—Do I then live to see you smile again? to see you restored to liberty; your mind at ease, and your health unimpaired!" "You have lived (said she) to see my obligations to Sir Launcelot Greaves accumulated in such a manner, that a whole life spent in acknowledgment will scarce suffice to demonstrate a due sense of his goodness." "You greatly over-rate my services, which have been rather the duties of common humanity, than the efforts of a generous passion, too noble to be thus evinced;—but let not my unseasonable transports detain you a moment longer on this detested scene—Give me leave to hand you into the coach, and commit you to the care of this good lady, attended by this honest young gentleman, who is my particular friend." So saying, he presented Mr. Thomas Clarke, who had the honour to salute the fair hand of the ever amiable Aurelia.

The

The
of the
wait
Kaw
course
and
upon
consp
bery,
the k
night
enoug
pate t
his se
adver
the h
In
chanc
he fo
band
night
apol
be of
liber
lif o
him f
your
I hav
the h
to bel
now i
iambi
and a
clined
joy of
The
ticular
to his
his gr
Vo

The ladies being safely coached under the escorte of the lawyer, Sir Launcelot assured them he should wait on them in the evening, at the house of Dr. Kawdle, whither they immediately directed their course. Our hero, who remained with the constable and his gang, enquired for Mr. Bernard Shackle, upon whose person he intended to serve a writ of conspiracy, over and above a prosecution for robbery, in consequence of his having disencumbered the knight of his money and other effects on the first night of his confinement. Mr. Shackle had discretion enough to avoid this encounter, and even to anticipate the indictment for felony, by directing one of his servants to restore the cash and papers, which our adventurer accordingly received, before he quitted the house.

In the prosecution of his search after Shackle, he chanced to enter the chamber of the bard, whom he found in dishabille, writing at a table, with a bandage over one eye, and his head covered with a night-cap of bays. The knight having made an apology for this intrusion, desired to know, if he could be of any service to Mr. Distich, as he was now at liberty to use the little influence he had for the relief of his fellow sufferers. The poet, having eyed him for some time askance, "I told you (said he) your stay in this place would be of short duration.—I have sustained a small disalter on my left eye from the hands of a rascally cordwainer, who pretends to believe himself the king of Prussia; and I am now in the very act of galling his majesty with keen iambics.—If you can help me to a roll of tobacco and a bottle of geneva, so; if you are not so inclined, your humble servant—I shall share in the joy of your deliverance."

The knight declined gratifying him in these particulars, which he apprehended might be prejudicial to his health; but offered his assistance in redressing his grievances, provided he laboured under any cruel

treatment or inconvenience. "I comprehend the full extent of your generosity: (replied the satyr) you are willing to assist me in every thing, except the only circumstances in which assistance is required—God b'w'ye—If you see Ben Bullock, tell him I wish he would not dedicate any more of his works to me.—Damn the fellow; he has changed his note and begins to snivel.—For my part, I stick to my former maxim, defy all the world, and will die hard, even if death should be preceded by damnation."

The knight, finding him thus incorrigible, left him to the slender chance of being one day comforted by the dram bottle; but resolved, if possible, to set on foot an accurate enquiry into the œconomy and transactions of this private inquisition, that ample justice might be done in favour of every injured individual confined within its walls. In the afternoon he did not fail to visit his Aurelia; and all the protestations of their mutual passion were once more interchanged. He now produced the letter, which had caused such fatal disquiet in his bosom; and Miss Darnel no sooner eyed the paper, than she recollected it was a formal dismissal, which she had intended and directed for Mr. Sycamore. This the uncle had intercepted, and cunningly inclosed in another cover, addressed to Sir Launcelot Græaves, who was now astonished beyond measure to see the mystery so easily unfolded. The joy that now diffused itself in the hearts of our lovers, is more easily conceived than described; but, in order to give a stability to this mutual satisfaction, it was necessary that Amelia should be secured from the tyranny of her uncle, whose power of guardianship would not otherwise for some months expire.

Dr. Kawdle and his lady having entered into their deliberations on this subject, it was agreed that Miss Darnel should have recourse to the protection of the lord chancellor; but such application was rendered unnecessary

unnecessary by the unexpected arrival of John Clump with the following letter to Mrs. Kawdle from the steward of Anthony Darnel, dated at Aurelia's house in the country. "Madam, it hath pleased God to afflict Mr. Darnel with a severe stroke of the dead palsy.—He was taken yesterday, and now lies insensible, seemingly at the point of death. Among the papers in his pocket, I found the inclosed, by which it appears that my honoured young lady, Miss Darnel, is confined in a private mad-house. I am afraid Mr. Darnel's fate is a just judgment of God upon him for his cruelty to that excellent person. I need not exhort you, madam, to take, immediately upon the receipt of this, such measures as will be necessary for the enlargement of my poor young lady. In the mean time, I shall do the needful for the preservation of her property in this place, and send you an account of any further alteration that may happen; being very respectfully, Madam, your most obedient humble servant, Ralph Mattocks."

Clump had posted up to London with this intimation, on the wings of love, and being covered with clay from the heels to the eyes upwards, he appeared in such an unfavourable light at Dr. Kawdle's door, that the footman refused him admittance. Nevertheless, he pushed him aside, and sought his way upstairs into the dining-room, where the company was not a little astonished at such an apparition. The fellow himself was no less amazed at seeing Aurelia, and his own sweetheart Mrs. Dolly Cowslip. He forthwith fell upon his knees, and, in silence, held out the letter, which was taken by the doctor, and presented to his wife, according to the direction. She did not fail to communicate the contents, which were far from being unwelcome to the individuals who composed this little society. Mr. Clump was honoured with the approbation of his young lady, who commended him for his zeal and expedition; bestowed upon him an handsome gratuity in the mean

time, and desired to see him again when he should be properly refreshed after the fatigue he had undergone.

Mr. Thomas Clarke being consulted on this occasion, gave it as his opinion, that Miss Darnel should without delay, choose another guardian for the few months that remained of her minority. The opinion was confirmed by the advice of some eminent lawyers, to whom immediate recourse was had; and Dr. Kawdle, being the person pitched upon for this office, the necessary forms were executed with all possible dispatch. The first use the doctor made of his guardianship was to sign a power, constituting Mr. Ralph Mattocks his attorney *pro tempore*, for managing the estate of Miss Aurelia Darnel; and this was forwarded to the steward by the hands of Clump, who set out with it for the seat of Darnel-hill, though not without a heavy heart, occasioned by some intimation he had received, concerning the connexion between his dear Dolly, and Mr. Clarke the lawyer.

CHAPTER the last.

Which, it is to be hoped, will be, on more accounts than one, agreeable to the reader.

SIR Launcelot having vindicated the liberty, confirmed the safety, and secured the heart of his charming Aurelia, now found leisure to unravel the conspiracy which had been executed against his person; and with that view commenced a law-suit against the owner of the house where he and his mistress had been separately confined. Mr. Shackles was, notwithstanding all the submissions and atonement which he offered to make, either in private or public, indicted on the statute of kidnapping, tried, convicted, punished by a severe fine, and standing in the pillory. A judicial writ *ad inquirendum* being executed,

executed, the prisons of his inquisition were laid open, and several innocent captives enlarged.

In the course of Shackle's trial, it appeared that the knight's confinement was a scheme executed by his rival Mr. Sycamore, according to the device of his counsellor Dawdle, who, by this contrivance, had reconciled himself to his patron, after having deserted him in the day of battle. Our hero was so incensed at the discovery of Sycamore's treachery and ingratitude, that he went in quest of him immediately, to take vengeance on his person, accompanied by captain Crowe, who wanted to balance accounts with Mr. Dawdle. But those gentlemen had wisely avoided the impending storm, by retiring to the continent, on pretence of travelling for improvement.

Sir Launcelot was not now so much of a knight errant, as to leave Aurelia to the care of Providence, and pursue the traitors to the farthest extremities of the earth. He practised a much more easy, certain and effectual method of revenge, by instituting a process against them, which, after writs of *capias*, *alias*, & *pluries*, had been repeated, subjected them both to outlawry. Mr. Sycamore and his friend being thus deprived of the benefit of the law, by their own neglect, would likewise have forfeited their goods and chattels to the king, had not they made such submissions as appeased the wrath of Sir Launcelot and Captain Crowe: then they ventured to return, and by dint of interest obtained a reversal of the outlawry. But this grace they did not enjoy, till long after our adventurer was happily established in life.

While the knight waited impatiently for the expiration of Aurelia's minority, and, in the mean time consoled himself with the imperfect happiness arising from her conversation, and those indulgences which the most unblemished virtue could bestow; Captain Crowe projected another plan of vengeance

against the conjurer, whose lying oracles had cost him such a world of vexation. The truth is, the captain began to be tired of idleness, and undertook this adventure to keep his hand in use. He imparted his design to Crabshaw, who had likewise suffered in spirit from the predictions of the said offender, and was extremely well disposed to assist in punishing the false prophet. He now took it for granted that he should not be hanged for stealing a horse; and thought it very hard to pay so much money for a deceitful prophecy, which, in all likelihood, would never be fulfilled.

Actuated by these motives, they set out together for the house of consultation: but they found it shut up and abandoned, and, upon inquiry in the neighbourhood, learned that the conjurer had moved his quarters that very day on which the captain had recourse to his art. This was actually the case: he knew the fate of Sir Launcelot would soon come to light, and he did not chuse to wait the consequence. He had other motives for decamping. He had run a score at the public-house, which he had no money to discharge, and wanted to disengage himself from his female associate, who knew too much of his affairs, to be kept at a proper distance. All these purposes he had answered, by retreating softly, without beat of drum, while his Sybil was abroad running down prey for his devouring. He had not, however, taken his measures so cunningly, but that this old hag discovered his new lodgings, and, in revenge, gave information to the publican. This creditor took out a writ accordingly: and the bailiff had just secured his person as Captain Crowe and Timothy Crabshaw chanced to pass by the door in their way homewards, through an obscure street near the Seven Dials.

The conjurer having no subterfuge left, but a great many particular reasons for avoiding an explanation with the justice, like the man between the devil and the deep sea, of two evils chose the least; and beckoning

Coming to the captain, called him by his name. Crowe, thus addressed, replied with a "Hilloah!" and looking towards the place from whence he was hailed, at once recognized the necromancer. Without further hesitation he sprang across the street, and collaring Albumazar, exclaimed, "Aha! old boy; is the wind in that corner?—I thought we should grapple one day—now will I bring you up by the head, though all the devils in hell were-blown abast the beam."

The bailiff seeing his prisoner so roughly handled before, and at the same time assaulted behind by Crabshaw, who cried, "Shew me a liar, and I'll shew you a thief—who is to be hanged now?"—I say, the bailiff, fearing he should lose the benefit of his job, began to put on his contentious face, and, declaring the doctor was his prisoner, swore he could not surrender him without a warrant from the lord chief justice. The whole groupe adjourning into the parlour, the conjurer desired to know of Crowe, whether Sir Launcelot was found? being answered, "Eye, eye, safe enough to see you made fast in the bilboes, brother;" he told the Captain he had something of consequence to communicate for his advantage; and proposed that Crowe and Crabshaw should bail the action, which lay only for a debt of three pounds.

Crowe stormed, and Crabshaw grinned at this modest proposal; but when they understood that they could only be bound for his appearance, and reflected that they needed not part with him until his body should be surrendered unto justice, they consented to give bail; and the bond being executed, conveyed him directly to the house of our adventurer. The boisterous Crowe introduced him to Sir Launcelot with such an abrupt unconnected detail of his offence, as the knight could not understand without Timothy's annotations. These were followed by some questions put to the conjurer, who laying aside his black gown, and plucking off his white

beard, exhibited to the astonished spectators the very individual countenance of the empyrical politician Ferret, who had played our hero such a slippery trick after the electioneering adventure.

“ I perceive (said he) you are preparing to expostulate, and upbraid me for having given a false information against you to the country justice. I look upon mankind to be in a state of nature, a truth which Hobbes hath stumbled upon by accident. I think every man has a right to avail himself of his talents, even at the expence of his fellow-creatures; just as we see the fish, and other animals of the creation devouring one another. I found the justice but one degree removed from idiotism, and knowing that he would commit some blunder in the execution of his office, which would lay him at your mercy, I contrived to make his folly the instrument of my escape — I was dismissed without being obliged to sign the information I had given; and you took ample vengeance for his tyranny and impertinence. I came to London, where my circumstances obliged me to live in disguise. In the character of a conjurer, I was consulted by your follower Crowe, and your squire Crabshaw. I did little or nothing but echo back the intelligence they brought me, except prognosticating that Crabshaw would be hanged; a prediction to which I found myself so irresistibly impelled, that I am persuaded it was the real effect of inspiration. — I am now arrested for a paltry sum of money, and, moreover, liable to be sent to Bridewell as an impostor—let those answer for my conduct whose cruelty and insolence have driven me to the necessity of using such subterfuges—I have been oppressed and persecuted by the government for speaking truth—your omnipotent laws have reconciled contradictions. That which is acknowledged to be truth in fact, is construed falsehood in law; and great reason we have to boast of a constitution founded on the basis of absurdity—But, wav-

ing these remarks, I own I am unwilling to be either imprisoned for debt, or punished for imposture—I know how far to depend upon generosity, and what is called benevolence; words to amuse the weak-minded—I build upon a surer bottom—I will bargain for your assistance—it is in my power to put twelve thousand pounds into the pocket of Samuel Crowe, that there sea-ruffian, who by his good will would hang me to the yard's arm—”

There he was interrupted by the seaman. “Damn your rat's eyes! none of your—hang thee! fish my topmasts! if the rope was fairly reeved, and the tackle sound, d'ye see——” Mr. Clarke, who was present, began to stare; while the knight assured Ferret, that if he was really able and willing to serve Captain Crowe in any thing essential, he should be amply rewarded. In the mean time, he discharged the debt, and assigned him an apartment in his own house. That same day Crowe, by the advice of Sir Launcelot and his nephew, entered into conditional articles with the cynic, to allow him the interest of fifteen hundred pounds for life; provided, by his means, the captain should obtain possession of the estate of Hobby-hole in Yorkshire, which had belonged to his grandfather, and of which he was heir of blood.

This bond being executed, Mr. Ferret discovered that he himself was the lawful husband of Bridget Maple, aunt to Samuel Crowe, by a clandestine marriage; which, however, he convinced them he could prove by undeniable evidence. This being the case, she, the said Bridget Maple, alias Ferret, was a *covert femme*, consequently could not transact any deed of alienation without his concurrence; ergo, the docking of the intail of the estate of Hobby-hole was illegal and of none effect. This was a very agreeable declaration to the whole company, who did not fail to congratulate Captain Crowe on the prospect of his being restored to his inheritance. Tom Clarke,

in

in particular, protested, with tears in his eyes, that it gave him unspeakable joy; and his tears trickled the faster, when Crowe with an arch look signified, that now he was pretty well virtualled for life, he had some thoughts of embarking on the voyage of matrimony,

But that point of happiness to which, as the north pole, the course of these adventures hath been invariably directed, was still unattained; we mean, the indissoluble union of the accomplished Sir Launcelot Greaves and the enchanting Miss Darnel. Our hero now discovered in his mistress a thousand charms, which hitherto he had no opportunity to contemplate. He found her beauty excelled by her good sense, and her virtue superior to both. He found her untainted by that giddiness, vanity, and affectation, which distinguish the fashionable females of the present age. He found her uninfected by the rage for diversion and dissipation; for noise, tumult, gew gaws, glitter, and extravagance. He found her not only raised by understanding and taste far above the amusements of little vulgar minds; but even exalted by uncommon genius and refined reflection, so as to relish the more sublime enjoyments of rational pleasure. He found her possessed of that vigour of mind which constitutes true fortitude, and vindicates the empire of reason. He found her heart incapable of disguise or dissimulation; frank, generous, and open; susceptible of the most tender impression; glowing with a keen sense of honour, and melting with humanity. A youth of his sensibility could not fail of being deeply affected by such attractions. The nearer he approached the center of happiness, the more did the velocity of his passion increase. Her uncle still remained insensible, as it were, in the arms of death. Time seemed to linger in its lapse, till the knight was inflamed to the most eager degree of impatience. He communicated his distress to Aurelia; he pressed her with the most pathetic remonstrances to abridge the

the

the torture of his suspense. He interested Mrs. Kawdle in his behalf; and, at length, his importunity succeeded. The banns of marriage were regularly published, and the ceremony was performed in the parish church, in the presence of Dr. Kawdle and his lady, Captain Crowe, lawyer Clarke, and Mrs. Dolly Cowflip.

The bride, instead of being disguised in tawdry stuffs of gold or silver, and sweating under a harness of diamonds, according to the elegant taste of the times, appeared in a negligee of plain blue satin, without any other jewels than her eyes, which far outshone all that ever was produced by the mines of Golconda. Her hair had no other extraneous ornament than a small sprig of artificial roses; but the dignity of her air, the elegance of her shape, the sweetness and sensibility of her countenance, added to such warmth of colouring, and such exquisite symmetry of features, as could not be excelled by human nature, attracted the eyes and excited the admiration of all the beholders. The effect they produced in the heart of Sir Launcelot, was such a rapture as we cannot pretend to describe. He made his appearance on this occasion, in a white coat and blue satin vest, both embroidered with silver; and all who saw him could not but own that he alone seemed worthy to possess the lady whom heaven had destined for his consort. Captain Crowe had taken off a blue suit of cloaths strongly guarded with bars of broad gold lace, in order to honour the nuptials of his friend: he wore upon his head a bag-wig *a la pigeon*, made by an old acquaintance in Wapping; and to his side he had girded a huge plate-hilted sword, which he had bought of a recruiting serjeant. Mr. Clarke was dressed in pompadour, with gold buttons, and his lovely Dolly in a smart checked lutestring, a present from her mistress.

The whole company dined, by invitation, at the house of Dr. Kawdle, and here it was that the two
most

most deserving lovers on the face of the earth attained to the consummation of all earthly felicity. The captain and his nephew had a hint to retire in due time. Mrs. Kawdle conducted the amiable Aurelia, trembling, to the marriage-bed: our hero glowing with a bridegroom's ardour, claimed the husband's privilege: Hymen lighted up his brightest torch at virtue's lamp, and every star shed its happiest influence on their heaven-directed union. Instructions had been already dispatched to prepare Greavebury-hall for the reception of its new mistress; and for that place the new-married couple set out next morning, according to the plan which had been previously concerted. Sir Launcelot and lady Greaves, accompanied by Mrs. Kawdle, and attended by Dolly, travelled in their own coach drawn by six dappled horses. Dr. Kawdle, with Captain Crowe, occupied the doctor's post-chariot, provided with four bays; Mr. Clarke had the honour to bestride the loins of Bronzomarte: Mr. Ferret was mounted upon an old hunter: Crabshaw stuck close to his friend Gilbert; and two other horsemen completed the retinue. There was not an aching heart in the whole cavalcade, except that of the young Lawyer, which was by turns invaded with hot desires, and chilling scruples. Though he was fond of Dolly to distraction, his regard to worldly reputation, and his attention to worldly interest, were continually raising up bars to a legal gratification of his love. His pride was startled at the thought of marrying the daughter of a poor country publican; and he, moreover, dreaded the resentment of his uncle Crowe, should he take any step of this nature without his concurrence. Many a wishful look did he cast at Dolly, the tears standing in his eyes; and many a woeful sigh did he utter.

Lady Greaves immediately perceived the situation of his heart, and, by questioning Mrs. Cowslip, discovered a mutual passion between these lovers. She consulted

consulted her dear knight on the subject; and he catechized the lawyer, who pleaded guilty. The captain being sounded, as to his opinion, declared he would be steered in that as well as every other course of life by Sir Launcelot and his lady, whom he verily revered as beings of an order superior to the ordinary race of mankind. This favourable response being obtained from the sailor, our hero took an opportunity on the road, one day after dinner, in presence of the whole company, to accost the lawyer in these words; "My good friend Clarke, I have ynr happiness very much at heart—your father was an honest man, to whom my family had manifold obligations. I have had these many years a personal regard for yourself, derived from your own integrity of heart and goodness of disposition—I see you are affected, and shall be brief—Besides this regard, I am indebted to your friendship for the liberty—what shall I say, for the inestimable happiness I now enjoy, in possessing the most excellent—But I understand that significant glance of my Aurelia—I will not offend her delicacy—The truth is, my obligation is very great, and it is time I should evince my gratitude—If the stewardship of my estate is worth your acceptance, you shall have it immediately, together with the house and farm of Cockerton in my neighbourhood. I know you have a passion for Mrs. Dolly; and believe she looks upon you with the eyes of tender prepossession—don't blush Dolly,—besides your agreeable person, which all the world must approve, you can boast of virtue, fidelity, and friendship. Your attachment to Lady Greaves neither she or I shall ever forget—if you are willing to unite your fate with Mr. Clarke, your mistress gives me leave to assure you she will stock the farm at her own expence; and we will celebrate the wedding at Greavesbury-hall——"

By this time the hearts of these grateful lovers had overflowed. Dolly was sitting on her knees, bathing
her

her lady's hand with her tears; and Mr. Clarke appeared in the same attitude by Sir Launcelot. The uncle, almost as much affected as the nephew, by the generosity of our adventurer, cried aloud, "I pray God that you and your glorious consort may have smooth seas and gentle gales whithersoever you are bound—as for my kinsman Tom, I'll give him a thousand pounds, to set him fairly afloat; and if he prove not a faithful tender to you his benefactor, I hope he will founder in this world, and be damned in that which is to come." Nothing now was wanting to the completion of their happiness, but the consent of Dolly's mother at the Black Lyon, who they did not suppose could have any objection to such an advantageous match for her daughter: but in this particular they were mistaken.

In the mean time, they arrived at the village where the knight had exercised the duties of chivalry; and there he received the gratulation of Mr. Fillet, and the attorney who had offered to bail him before Justice Gobble. Mutual civilities having passed, they gave him to understand, that Gobble and his wife were turned methodists. All the rest of the prisoners, whom he had delivered, came to testify their gratitude, and were hospitably entertained. Next day they halted at the Black Lyon, where the good woman was overjoyed to see Dolly so happily preferred: but when Sir Launcelot unfolded the proposed marriage, she interrupted him with a scream. "Christ Jesus, forbid—marry and amen! match with her own brother!"

At this exclamation Dolly fainted; her lover stood with his ears erect, and his mouth wide open; Crowe stared; while the knight and his lady expressed equal surprize and concern. When Sir Launcelot intreated Mrs. Cowslip to explain this mystery, she told him, that about sixteen years ago, Mr. Clarke, senior, had brought Dolly, then an infant, to her house, when she and her late husband lived in another part of the country;

country; and as she had then been lately delivered of a child which did not live, he hired her as nurse to the little foundling. He owned she was a love-begotten babe, and from time to time paid handsomely for the board of Dolly, who he desired might pass for her own daughter. In his last illness, he assured her he had taken care to provide for the child; but since his death she had received no account of any such provision. She, moreover, informed his honour, that Mr. Clarke had deposited in her hands a diamond ring and a sealed paper, never to be opened without his order, until Dolly should be demanded in marriage by the man she should like; and not then, except in presence of the clergyman of the parish. "Send for the clergyman this instant, (cried our hero, reddening, and fixing his eyes on Dolly) I hope all will yet be well."

The vicar arriving, and being made acquainted with the nature of the case, the landlady produced the paper; which being opened, appeared to be an authentic certificate, that the person, commonly known by the name of Dorothy Cowslip, was in fact Dorothea Greaves, daughter of Jonathan Greaves, Esq; by a young gentlewoman who had been some years deceased. —

"The remaining part of this mystery I myself can unfold (exclaimed the knight, while he ran and embraced the astonished Dolly as his kinswoman) Jonathan Greaves was my uncle, and died before he came of age; so that he could make no settlement on his child, the fruit of a private amour founded on a promise of marriage, of which this ring was a token. Mr. Clarke, being his confidant, disposed of the child, and at length, finding his constitution decay, revealed the secret to my father, who, in his will, bequeathed one hundred pounds a year to this agreeable foundling; but as they both died while I was abroad, and some of the memorandums touching this transaction probably were mislaid, I never till now
could

could discover where or how my pretty cousin was situated. I shall recompence the good woman for her care and fidelity, and take pleasure in bringing this affair to a happy issue."

The lovers were now overwhelmed with transports of joy and gratitude, and every countenance was lighted up with satisfaction. From this place to the habitation of Sir Launcelot the bells were rung in every parish, and the corporation in their formalities congratulated him in every town through which he passed. About five miles from Greavebury-hall he was met by above five thousand persons of both sexes and every age, dressed out in their gayest apparel, headed by Mr. Ralph Mattox from Darnel-hill, and the rector from the knight's own parish. They were preceded by music of different kinds ranged under a great variety of flags and ensigns; and the women, as well as the men, bedizened with fancy-knots and marriage-favours. At the end of the avenue, a select bevy of comely virgins arrayed in white, and a separate band of choice youths, distinguished by garlands of laurel and holly, interweaved, fell into the procession, and sung in chorus a rustic epithalamium composed by the curate. At the gate they were received by the venerable house-keeper Mrs. Oakley, whose features were so brightened by the occasion, that with the first glance she made a conquest of the heart of Captain Crowe; and this connexion was improved afterwards into a legal conjunction.

Mean while the houses of Greavebury-hall and Darnel-hill were set open for the entertainment of all comers, and both echoed with the sounds of festivity. After the ceremony of giving and receiving visits had been performed by Sir Launcelot Greaves and his lady, Mr. Clarke was honoured with the hand of the agreeable Miss Dolly Greaves; and the captain was put in possession of his paternal estate. The perfect and uninterrupted felicity of the knight and his endearing consort, diffused itself through the whole

whole adjacent country, as far as their example and influence could extend. They were admired, esteemed, and applauded by every person of taste, sentiment, and benevolence, at the same time beloved, revered, and almost adored by the common people, among whom they suffered not the merciless hand of indigence or misery to seize one single sacrifice.

Ferret, at first, seemed to enjoy his easy circumstances; but the novelty of this situation soon wore off, and all his misanthropy returned. He could not bear to see his fellow-creatures happy around him; and signified his disgust to Sir Launcelot, declaring his intention of returning to the metropolis, where he knew there would be always food sufficient for the ravenous appetite of his spleen. Before he departed, the knight made him partake of his bounty, though he could not make him taste of his happiness, which soon received a considerable addition in the birth of a son, destined to be the heir and representative of two worthy families, whose mutual animosity the union of his parents had so happily extinguished.

F I N I S.